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NEW MUSICAL EXPRESS

READERS' POLL RESULTS
Class of '76 Cleans Up
This Year's Scorecard Inside

GANG OF TWO/Pic PENNIE SMITH

Four-ward Against The Forces Of Reaction And Elitism With The . . .

GANG OF FOUR

(The other two are on pages 7-8)

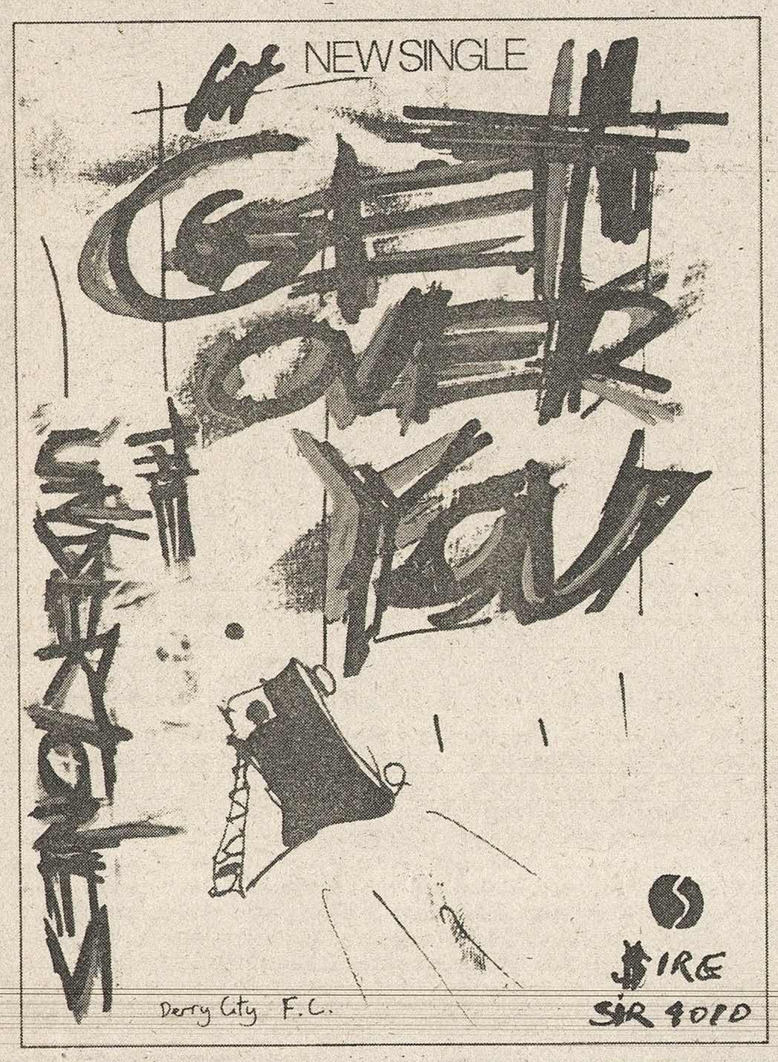
Walter Egan

ONLY UK LIVE APPEARANCE

THE Venue

1st FEBRUARY

polydor



LOOKING FOR A FAN CLUB?

Look in our Classified

NME — YOUR PAPER, USE IT

FIVE YEARS AGO

Week ending January 22, 1974

Last Week	This Week		
10	1	TEENAGE RAMPAGE	Sweet (RCA)
12	2	TIGER FEET	Mud (Rak)
2	3	YOU WON'T FIND ANOTHER FOOL LIKE ME	New Seekers (Polydor)
1	4	THE SHOW MUST GO ON	Leo Sayer (Chrysalis)
3	5	DANCE WITH THE DEVIL	Cozy Powell (Rak)
16	6	RADAR LOVE	Golden Earring (Track)
4	7	MY COO-CA-CHOO	Alvin Stardust (Magnet)
16	8	SOLITAIRE	Andy Williams (CBS)
8	9	FOREVER	Roy Wood (Harvest)
6	10	POOL HALL RICHARD/I WISH IT WOULD RAIN	Faces (Warner Brothers)

TEN YEARS AGO

Week ending January 22, 1969

Last Week	This Week		
2	1	ALBATROSS	Fleetwood Mac (Blue Horizon)
1	2	OB-LA-DI OB-LA-DAH	Marmalade (CBS)
6	3	FOR ONCE IN MY LIFE	Stevie Wonder (Tamla Motown)
5	4	SOMETHING'S HAPPENING	Herman's Hermits (Columbia)
4	5	BUILD ME UP BUTTERCUP	Foundations (Pye)
3	6	LILY THE PINK	Scaffold (Parlophone)
9	7	PRIVATE NUMBER	William Bell & Judy Clay (Stax)
20	8	BLACKBERRY WAY	Move (Regal Zonophone)
13	9	FOX ON THE RUN	Manfred Mann (Fontana)
8	10	SABRE DANCE	Love Sculpture (Parlophone)

15 YEARS AGO

Week ending January 24, 1964

Last Week	This Week		
1	1	GLAD ALL OVER	Dave Clark Five (Columbia)
2	2	HIPPY HIPPY SHAKE	Swinging Blue Jeans (HMV)
3	3	I WANT TO HOLD YOUR HAND	Beatles (Parlophone)
18	4	NEEDLES AND PINS	Searchers (Pye)
11	5	I'M THE ONE	Gerry and The Pacemakers (Columbia)
5	6	I ONLY WANT TO BE WITH YOU	Dusty Springfield (Philips)
4	7	TWENTY-FOUR HOURS FROM TULSA	Gene Pitney (United Artists)
8	8	STAY	Hollies (Parlophone)
6	9	SWINGING ON A STAR	Big Dee Irwin (Colpix)
17	10	AS USUAL	Brenda Lee (Brunswick)

CHARTS

SINGLES

Week ending January 20, 1979

This Week	Last Week			Highest position	Weeks in chart
1	(1)	Y.M.C.A.	Village People (Mercury)	7	1
2	(4)	HIT ME WITH YOUR RHYTHM STICK	Ian Dury & The Blockheads (Stiff)	5	2
3	(3)	LAY YOUR LOVE ON ME	Racey (RAK)	6	3
4	(2)	SONG FOR GUY	Elton John (Rocket)	6	2
5	(6)	LE FREAK	Chic (Atlantic)	8	5
6	(11)	SEPTEMBER	Earth Wind & Fire (CBS)	4	6
7	(18)	HELLO THIS IS JOANIE	Paul Evans (Spring)	3	7
8	(14)	A LITTLE MORE LOVE	Olivia Newton-John (EMI)	4	8
9	(8)	YOU DON'T BRING ME FLOWERS	Barbra Streisand & Neil Diamond (CBS)	6	4
10	(9)	TOO MUCH HEAVEN	Bee Gees (RSO)	7	4
11	(16)	I'M EVERY WOMAN	Chaka Khan (Warner Bros)	6	11
12	(—)	ONE NATION UNDER A GROOVE	Funkadelic (Warner Bros)	2	12
13	(5)	MARY'S BOY CHILD	Boney M (Atlantic Hansa)	7	1
14	(21)	JUST THE WAY YOU ARE	Barry White (20th Century)	2	14
15	(10)	I LOST MY HEART TO A STARSHIP TROOPER	Sarah Brightman & Hot Gossip (Ariola Hansa)	8	6
16	(13)	I'LL PUT YOU TOGETHER AGAIN	Hot Chocolate (Rak)	6	13
17	(7)	A TASTE OF AGGRO	Barron Knights (Epic)	6	3
18	(—)	CAR 67	Driver 67 (Logo)	1	18
19	(—)	RAMA LAMA DING DONG	Rocky Sharpe & The Replays (Chiswick)	1	19
20	(25)	DR WHO	Mankind (Pinnacle)	6	20
21	(26)	MY LIFE	Billy Joel (CBS)	4	21
22	(—)	TAKE THAT TO THE BANK	Shalamar (RCA)	1	22
23	(29)	MIRRORS	Sally Oldfield (Bronze)	4	23
24	(24)	IN THE BUSH	Musique (CBS)	8	10
25	(—)	COOL MEDITATION	Third World (Island)	1	25
26	(22)	YOU NEEDED ME	Anne Murray (Capitol)	2	22
27	(15)	DO YA THINK I'M SEXY	Rod Stewart (Riva)	9	1
28	(20)	ALWAYS & FOREVER/MIND BLOWING DECISIONS	Heatwave (GTO)	10	7
29	(—)	THIS IS IT	Dan Hartman (Blue Sky)	1	29
30	(—)	EVERY NIGHT	Phoebe Snow (CBS)	1	30

BUBBLING UNDER . . .

HEAT OF THE BEAT — Roy Ayers (Polydor); JE SUIS MUSIC — Cerrone (CBS).

U.S. SINGLES

Week ending January 20, 1979

This Week	Last Week		
1	(1)	LE FREAK	Chic
2	(2)	TOO MUCH HEAVEN	Bee Gees
3	(4)	MY LIFE	Billy Joel
4	(5)	Y.M.C.A.	Village People
5	(6)	HOLD THE LINE	Toto
6	(7)	SEPTEMBER	Earth, Wind & Fire
7	(8)	OOH BABY BABY	Linda Ronstadt
8	(4)	YOU DON'T BRING ME FLOWERS	Barbra & Neil
9	(14)	A LITTLE MORE LOVE	Olivia Newton-John
10	(13)	EVERY I's A WINNER	Hot Chocolate
11	(12)	WE'VE GOT TONITE	Bob Seger & The Silver Bullet Band
12	(15)	FIRE	Pointer Sisters
13	(19)	DO YA THINK I'M SEXY	Rod Stewart
14	(17)	LOTTA LOVE	Nicolette Larson
15	(11)	PROMISES	Eric Clapton
16	(20)	GOT TO BE REAL	Cheryl Lynn
17	(9)	SHARING THE NIGHT TOGETHER	Dr Hook
18	(10)	(OUR LOVE) DON'T THROW IT ALL AWAY	Andy Gibb
19	(21)	NEW YORK GROOVE	Ace Frehley
20	(23)	SHAKE IT	Ian Matthews
21	(30)	SOUL MAN	Blues Brothers
22	(26)	I WAS MADE FOR DANCIN'	Leif Garrett
23	(16)	HOW YOU GONNA SEE ME NOW	Alice Cooper
24	(27)	DON'T HOLD BACK	Chanson
25	(—)	SOMEWHERE IN THE NIGHT	Barry Manilow
26	(18)	BICYCLE RACE / FAT BOTTOMED GIRLS	Queen
27	(—)	DON'T CRY OUT LOUD	Melisa Manchester
28	(—)	THE GAMBLER	Kenny Rogers
29	(—)	HOME AND DRY	Gerry Rafferty
30	(22)	I LOVE THE NIGHT LIFE (DISCO ROUND)	Alicia Bridges

Courtesy "CASH BOX"

ALBUMS

Week ending January 20, 1979

This Week	Last Week			Highest position	Weeks in chart
1	(1)	SHOWADDYWADDY'S GREATEST HITS 1976-1978	(Arista)	6	1
2	(9)	DON'T WALK BOOGIE	Various (EMI)	3	2
3	(2)	THE SINGLES 1974-1978	Carpenters (A&M)	7	2
4	(5)	BLONDES HAVE MORE FUN	Rod Stewart (Riva)	7	2
5	(7)	MIDNIGHT HUSTLE	Various (K-Tel)	7	3
6	(4)	NEIL DIAMOND'S 20 GOLDEN GREATS	Neil Diamond (MCA)	9	1
7	(6)	NIGHT FLIGHT TO VENUS	Boney M (Int Hansa)	26	1
8	(8)	WAR OF THE WORLDS	Jeff Wayne (CBS)	28	2
9	(16)	WINGS GREATEST	Wings (Parlophone)	4	9
10	(10)	A SINGLE MAN	Elton John (Rocket)	11	5
10	(15)	THE AMAZING DARTS	Darts (K-Tel)	10	7
12	(3)	GREASE	Original Soundtrack (RSO)	27	1
13	(11)	EMOTIONS	Various (K-Tel)	11	2
14	(12)	TONIC FOR THE TROOPS	Boomtown Rats (Ensign)	22	4
15	(13)	20 SONGS OF JOY	Harry Secombe (Warwick)	4	11
16	(18)	PARALLEL LINES	Blondie (Chrysalis)	14	7
17	(28)	THE BEST OF EARTH WIND AND FIRE VOL 1	Earth Wind & Fire (CBS)	2	17
18	(—)	ACTION REPLAY	Various (K-Tel)	1	8
19	(22)	INCANTATIONS	Mike Oldfield (Virgin)	4	14
20	(17)	EQUINOXE	Jean Michel Jarre (Polydor)	4	17
21	(—)	GREATEST HITS	Commodores (Motown)	3	21
22	(—)	20 GOLDEN GREATS	Doris Day (Warwick)	1	22
23	(27)	GIVE 'EM ENOUGH ROPE	Clash (CBS)	8	3
24	(20)	NIGHT GALLERY	Barron Knights (Epic)	5	10
25	(30)	LIONHEART	Kate Bush (EMI)	8	12
26	(—)	ARMED FORCES	Elvis Costello (Radar)	1	26
27	(—)	NEW BOOTS & PANTIES	Ian Dury & The Blockheads (Stiff)	35	5
28	(21)	JAZZ	Queen (EMI)	9	6
29	(14)	YOU DON'T BRING ME FLOWERS	Neil Diamond (CBS)	2	14
30	(—)	DREAM MUSIC	Various (Warwick)	1	30

BUBBLING UNDER . . .

CRUISIN' — Village People (Phonogram); DESTINY — Jacksons (Epic).

U.S. ALBUMS

Week ending January 20, 1979

This Week	Last Week		
1	(2)	52nd STREET	Billy Joel
2	(1)	BARBRA STREISAND'S GREATEST HITS VOL. 2	
3	(14)	BRIEFCASE FULL OF BLUES	Blues Brothers
4	(3)	A WILD & CRAZY GUY	Steve Martin
5	(4)	GREATEST HITS	Barry Manilow
6	(12)	BLONDES HAVE MORE FUN	Rod Stewart
7	(5)	GREASE	Various Artists
8	(10)	THE BEST OF EARTH, WIND & FIRE VOL. 1	
9	(9)	C'EST CHIC	Chic
10	(11)	YOU DON'T BRING ME FLOWERS	Neil Diamond
11	(8)	DOUBLE VISION	Foreigner
12	(6)	BACKLESS	Eric Clapton
13	(6)	TOTO	Toto
14	(7)	JAZZ	Queen
15	(16)	CRUISIN'	Village People
16	(13)	LIVING IN THE U.S.A.	Linda Ronstadt
17	(27)	TOTALLY HOT	Olivia Newton John
18	(17)	LIVE AND MORE	Donna Summer
19	(23)	MOTOR BOOTY AFFAIR	Parliament
20	(20)	SOME GIRLS	Rolling Stones
21	(21)	WINGS GREATEST	Wings
22	(19)	GREATEST HITS 1974-1978	Steve Miller Band
23	(24)	PIECES OF EIGHT	Styx
24	(24)	GREATEST HITS	Commodores
25	(25)	ACE FREHLEY	
26	(18)	LIVE BOOTLEG	Aerosmith
27	(28)	DOG & BUTTERFLY	Heart
28	(29)	THE STRANGER	Billy Joel
29	(—)	MINUTE BY MINUTE	Doobie Brothers
30	(—)	SHAKEDOWN STREET	Grateful Dead

Courtesy "CASH BOX"

VAN MORRISON

MORRISON TOUR SET

THE LONG-AWAITED British tour by Van Morrison has now been finalised. After playing six Irish dates, he opens a string of 15 U.K. concerts in late February, including three successive nights at London's Hammersmith Odeon. And to tie in with his outing, his new single "Matalia" — taken from the "Wavelengths" album — is released by Warners on February 23.

Irish dates are at Cork City Hall (February 18), Belfast Whitla Hall (20 and 21) and Dublin Stadium (22, 23 and 24). Morrison then flies to London for the Hammersmith gigs on February 26, 27 and 28, followed by provincial shows at Manchester Apollo (March 2), Portsmouth Guildhall (4), Brighton Dome (5), Bristol Colston Hall (6), Oxford New Theatre (7),Sheffield City Hall (10), Birmingham Odeon (11), Leicester De Montfort Hall (12), Derby Assembly Hall (13), Edinburgh Odeon (15), Glasgow Apollo (16) and Newcastle City Hall (19).

His band for the tour comprises Peter Bardens (keyboards), Bobby Tench and Herbie Armstrong (guitars), Mickey Feat (bass), Pete Van Hook (drums), John Altman (sax), Toni Marcus (violin) and Katie Kassoon and Anna Peacock (back-up vocals).

Hammersmith tickets are priced £5, £4 and £3. Elsewhere in the U.K. they are £3.50, £3 and £2.50 — with additional £2 seats at Manchester, Newcastle and Glasgow. The Hammersmith box-office is open now, and tickets go on sale next Monday (22) at other venues — except Portsmouth, Brighton, Sheffield, Derby, Edinburgh and Newcastle where January 29 is the opening date. Irish tickets go on sale tomorrow (Friday) priced £5 for Belfast and Dublin, and £3.50 for Cork. Tour promoter is Paul Charles for Asgard.

ZAPPA CONFIRMED

FRANK ZAPPA's February tour has now been confirmed, and his dates correspond with those forecast by NME two weeks ago. He'll be appearing with his brand new band, with whom he's already in London mixing a new album, for release shortly. The tour — which includes Zappa's first provincial concerts since The Mothers Of Invention were disbanded — takes in Birmingham Odeon (two shows on February 11), Manchester Apollo (12), Newcastle City Hall (13), Glasgow Apollo (14), Brighton Centre (16) and London Hammersmith Odeon (17, 18 and 19 with two shows on the middle night). Ticket prices are £5, £4.50 and £4 (Hammersmith and Newcastle); and £4, £3.50 and £3 (elsewhere).

● TOURS GALORE — see page 5.

NEWS DESK

EDITED: DEREK JOHNSON

Bette brightens U.K. gig circuit —WITH TWO RICH KIDS

BETTE BRIGHT & The Illuminations are undertaking their first series of major dates, to coincide with the January 26 release by Radar of their new single "Captain Of Your Ship". Bette is the former Deaf School lead singer who has now, to use her own words, "gone punk" — and she's joined in the line-up by ex-Deaf School colleague Clive Langer on lead guitar. Guesting in the band for the short tour are Glen Matlock (bass) and Rusty Egan (drums) of The Rich Kids, and a keyboards player has still to be named. Dates are Liverpool Eric's (January 26), Glasgow Strathclyde University (27), Fife St. Andrew's University (28), Edinburgh Tiffany's (29), Loughborough University (31), Leeds Fan Club (February 1), Birmingham Barbarella's (2) and London Camden Music Machine (3).

Public Image: new concert

THE FIRST major concert outside London by Public Image Ltd. takes place at the Kings Hall, in Manchester's Belle Vue complex, on Friday, February 23 (8pm—midnight). Also taking part are reggae band Merger, new-wavers The Pop Group and reggae poet Linton Kwesi Johnson. The show is billed as the Creation For Liberation Concert, and it's in aid of the Race Today Friendly Society who publish two monthly journals in the British black community, *Race Today* and *Bradford Black*. Tickets for the concert are all at the one price of £3.50, and are available now from the Belle Vue box-office.

Gen X: another ten dates fixed

GENERATION X this week confirmed another ten dates for their February tour which, as previously reported, opens at Malvern Winter Gardens (9). The new gigs are at Leicester University (10), Middlesbrough Town Hall Crypt (11), Wolverhampton Civic Hall (12), Blackburn King George's Hall (13), Bradford University (14), Sheffield Top Rank (20), Hanley Victoria Hall (21), Coventry Lanchester Polytechnic (22), Manchester Mayflower (23) and Birmingham Barbarella's (24). These are interspersed by their four Scottish dates (15-18) announced last week.

Apart from a major London date, which was still being finalised at press-time, this wraps up their latest itinerary. The tour ties in with the release by Chrysalis of their second album "Valley Of The Dolls", produced by Ian Hunter. And of course, their new single "King Rocker" is already out and looking chartbound.

● THE UNDERTONES, the Irish band who were supporting The Rezillos when the Scottish outfit decided to disband, are to headline their own tour from February 19 to March 12 — starting and ending at London Marquee; full dates to be announced shortly. Meanwhile scheduled for April.

● THE LURKERS pave a new single out tomorrow (Friday) on Beggars Banquet titled "Just Thirteen", to coincide with their delayed gig at London Camden Electric Ballroom this Sunday (21), with Adam & The Ants and The Edge supporting.

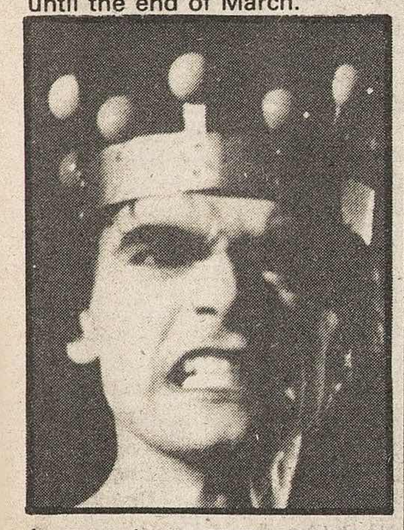
● THE VALVES, one of Edinburgh's leading new-wave outfits who've just signed a publishing deal with Albion Music, comes to London on January 25 for a Burns Night rave at The Nashville in Kensington. While in the South, they also play London Camden Music Machine (26), Margate Dreamland (27), Uxbridge Brunel University (28) and London Islington Hope & Anchor (29).

● STRAIGHT 8 have newly confirmed gigs at London Camden Dingwalls (tomorrow, Friday), London Harrow Rd. Windsor Castle (Saturday), London Fulham Golden Lion (January 31), Burton 76 Club (February 2), London Marquee (6), York Revolution (8), Dudley J.B.'s (9), Sheffield Limit (16) and Middlesbrough Rock Garden (17).

STEPPING UP PUNISHMENT

PUNISHMENT OF LUXURY, the Newcastle four-piece considered by many to be on the brink of the big league, took a considerable step up the ladder this week when they signed a long-term worldwide recording deal with United Artists. They had a single called "Puppet Life" issued last year on the Small Wonder label, but now they've graduated to one of the large companies. A single is planned for March release by U-A, to be followed by an album later in the year.

the first confirmed dates are London Kensington Nashville (tonight, Thursday), Birmingham Barbarella's (Friday), Dudley J.B.'s (Saturday), Edinburgh Tiffany's (January 22), Aberdeen Ruffles (24), Dundee Technical College (26). Huddersfield Polytechnic (30), London Camden Music Machine (31), Portsmouth Polytechnic (February 1) and Stafford North Staffs Polytechnic (2). The tour will continue until the end of March.



Luxury singer BRIAN BOND

Own band launch by Gary Holton

GARY HOLTON, former lead singer with the now-defunct Heavy Metal Kids, re-emerges this weekend with his own band The Gems. They're already in the studios recording their debut album, tentatively titled "Shooting The Singer Is No Way To Stop The Opera", under the supervision of Chris Tsangarides.

wide tour in April to coincide with the album's release, but beforehand they're playing several warm-up gigs — including London Kensington Nashville (tomorrow, Friday), London Covent Garden Rock Garden (Saturday), London Camden Dingwalls (January 31) and Cromer West Runton Pavilion (February 10), with a few more to be set.

Holton was front man with the Heavy Metal Kids for most of their five-year career, prior to their official break-up early last year. Since then, he's been sorting out his future plans and attempting to get it together with various musicians — while keeping the wolf from the door

an Irish outfit called Pretty Boy Ffloyd & The Gems, whose lead singer subsequently left — and Holton found that he gelled with them. They are, from left to right above, Martin Hughes (drums), Mark Robbins (keyboards, sax and guitar), Holton (lead vocals), Dennis Forbes (guitar) and Don McNeilly (bass).

WRECKLESS IS BILL-TOPPING!

WRECKLESS ERIC, fresh from a spell of writing and recording over the holiday period, begins a new series of live dates next week. So far set are London Strand Kings College (January 25), Southend Technical College (26), Northampton County Ground (27), Sheffield Limit Club (30), Bradford University (31), Leeds Polytechnic (February 1), Cromer West Runton Pavilion (2), Guildford Surrey University (3), London Marquee (5), Plymouth Metro (6) and Southampton University (7), with more still being finalised.

He'll be backed by his regular band The Four Rough Men comprising Brady (guitar), Malcolm Morley (guitar and keyboards), John Brown (bass) and Dave Otway (drums). They'll be promoting his current album "The Wonderful World Of Wreckless Eric", as well as airing material for a new Stiff album which they start recording after the tour. Support act on all dates is Charly Records band The Softies, and the show is billed as the "Out From Under The Wife's Feet Tour".

Another week, another dispute

IF we get this issue finished on time, we still don't know if we'll be able to proof-read it. (Say a big hi to the NUJ strike). And IF we get it proof-read, we still don't know if we've got enough paper to print it on. (Say a big hi to the lorry drivers' strike). And IF we get it printed, we still don't know if we'll ever get distributed. (Say a big hi to the rail strike).

And IF we finally hit the news-stands, and all copies aren't snapped up by panicking housewives . . . HEY, you might actually be reading this! Take as read the usual weekly circumstances beyond our control spiel, OK? See you next week. Maybe.

● *NME investigations this week suggest that, despite the lorry drivers' strike, there's unlikely to be any problems about the manufacture and distribution of records — at any rate, not for some considerable time. Most major companies have vast stockpiles of raw materials at their pressing plants — and either have their own lorry fleets, or use distributors unaffected by the strike.*

MUSIC BY POST

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NEWS BRIEFS

THE DAMNED play two shows, one an afternoon matinee for teenagers, at Liverpool Eric's this Saturday (20). And they are also set for Nottingham Sandpiper on January 26.

FIVE HAND REEL top the bill in the Clifton Folk Festival at Bristol University on Saturday, January 27. Among other acts appearing are Hedgehog Pie, Johnny Coppin, Downes & Beer, Nic Jones, Bill Caddick and the Mathews Brothers — plus, by way of contrast, girl jazz group Sweet Substitute.

BOSTON are in the process of finalising a British concert tour for the not-too-distant future, according to a spokesman for Epic Records. The exact period of their visit hasn't yet been determined, but it's expected to be in late winter or early spring.

LONDON'S Riverside Studios in Hammersmith next week stage a six-day season of rock concerts by up-and-coming bands, under the title of Premier Rock Festival. Featured acts are Snips & The Video Kings (January 23), The Casual Band (24), Panties (25), Isaac Guillory Band (26), Dave Lewis Band (27) and Roy Hill Band (28).

PANTIES, the all-girl band who headline in the Premier Rock Festival on January 25 (see above), have other gigs this month at Middlesbrough Teesside Polytechnic (tonight, Thursday), Dundee Technical College (Friday), Dumfries Stagecoach (Sunday), Portsmouth Polytechnic (26) and Chichester Bishop Otter College (27).

ERIC BELL BAND play Bristol Granary (tonight, Thursday), Liverpool Eric's (Friday), Birmingham Barbarella's (Saturday), Leeds Fforde Green Hotel (Sunday), London Islington Hope & Anchor (January 25), Derby Lonsdale College (26), Matlock Pavilion (27) and Jacksdale Grey Topper (28). They'll be on the road throughout February and March, with more gigs to be announced shortly.

A SERIES of late-night folk-flavoured concerts is being staged monthly at the Harlow Playhouse in Essex. First acts confirmed are Jeremy Taylor plus support (February 2), Noel Murphy and Jenny Beeching (March 2) and Telephone Bill & The Smooth Operators and Adrian May (April 6).

MUD founder member and lead vocalist Les Gray has now officially quit the band, in order to concentrate on a solo career. As previously reported, he appears in Jack Good's four "Oh Boy" Sunday concerts at London's Astoria Theatre, starting January 28. Mud have not yet found a replacement.

TANGERINE DREAM have been forced to postpone their projected February tour of Britain, plans for which were reported last week, because Edgar Froese is unwell. Their visit was intended to promote tour can be re-arranged. "Force

MATCHBOX start another tour at London Hackney Adam & Eve on March 10. Also set are Rayleigh Crocs (12), London Southgate Royalty (15), Luton Kingsway (17), Carshalton St. Helier Club (21), St. Albans City Hall (22), Redhill Centre (23), Southend Minerva (24), London Tottenham White Hart (30) and Loughborough Town Hall (31).

HEATHCLIFFE takes his 'Tribute To Elvis' show to Skegness Arcadia Theatre for three days from February 1, then plays Hayes Alfred Beck Centre on February 10. After a ten-day Italian tour, he returns for concerts at Watford Palace (March 4) and St. Helens Theatre Royal (20). Further dates are being set.

WRITZ go back on the road next month to preview their debut single "Night Nurse", now delayed until mid-March. So far set are Kirklevington Country Club (February 2), Guildford Merristwood College (14), Plymouth St. Mark's College (16), Birmingham Bogarts (21), Woodbridge Framlingham School (24) and London Middlesex Polytechnic (27).

Coyne at Royalty

KEVIN COYNE, just back from a month-long European tour, is going out on the road around Britain. So far only one date has been confirmed, and that's a major London concert at the Royalty Theatre in Kingsway on February 18. Provincial gigs will be announced shortly. Tickets for the London show, when he'll be joined on stage by Zoot Money, go on sale tomorrow (Friday) priced £2.75, £2.25, £2 and £1.75. And Coyne has a new album coming out on January 26 on the Virgin label, titled "Millionaires And Teddy Bears".

Radio 1 is extending

THE DELAYED separation of BBC Radio 1 and 2, originally planned for the autumn, finally goes ahead on Saturday, January 27. And from that date, Radio 1 will be totally independent from 6am to midnight every day. At the same time, Radio 2 begins round-the-clock 24-hour broadcasting. The new Radio 1 schedules are as follows:

WEEKDAYS: 6am Dave Lee Travis; 9.00 Simon Bates; 11.30 Paul Burnett (with Newsbeat at 12.30); 2pm Tony Blackburn; 4.30 Kid Jensen (with Newsbeat at 5.30); 7.0 different show each night, see below; 8.0 Andy Peebles; 9.50 Newsbeat; 10.0-midnight John Peel (Monday-Thursday) and Tommy Vance's Rock Show (Friday).

- The 7-8pm spot features "Stayin' Alive" with Kid Jensen (Monday); repeat of Moody Blues Story, followed on February 27 by "Personal Call" (Tuesday); Radio 1 Mailbag with Anne Nightingale (Wednesday); "Talkabout" with Jonathan King and Cindy Kent (Thursday); and "Round Table" with Kid Jensen (Friday).

SATURDAYS: 7am Playground (David Rider); 8.0 Junior Choice (Ed Stewart); 10.0 Peter Powell; 1pm Adrian Juste; 2.0 Paul Gambaccini; 4.30 Moody Blues Story; 5.30 It's Rock'n'Roll (Stuart Coleman); 6.30 In Concert; 7.30 Mike Read; 10.0-midnight Disco Show.

SUNDAYS: 8am Junior Choice; 10.0 Noel Edmonds; 1pm Jimmy Savile; 3.0 Anne Nightingale; 5.0 Top 40 (Simon Bates); 7.0 Star Special starting with Smokey Robinson; 9.0 Alexis Korner; 10.0-midnight Sounds Of Jazz.

Cheap Trick extra dates

CHEAP TRICK have added another three dates to their U.K. tour, reported two weeks ago — at Exeter Routes (February 5), Birmingham Barbarella's (8) and Lincoln Technical College (15). And their gig on February [illegible] by British outfit Grand Hotel, whose new single "Double Vision (Split Decision)" is released by CBS on January 26, followed on February 9 by their debut album "Do Not Disturb".

'Tommy' for West End

THE NEW STAGE production of Pete Townshend's rock opera "Tommy" has proved so successful in its out-of-town run — a seven-week season at Hornchurch Queens Theatre — that it's moving into London's West End next month. The title role is played by Allan Love, who took over from David Essex in "Godspell"; Anna Nicholas, who's appeared in TV's "Rock Follies", is cast as the Acid Queen; and Bob Grant, best-known as one of the stars of "On The Buses", plays Uncle Ernie. It opens at the Queens Theatre in Shaftesbury Avenue, for an indefinite season on February 6 (with previous nightly from January 31).

Big names hit the road, and it's TOURS GALORE!

STEVE HILLAGE

STEVE HILLAGE has confirmed seven major concerts for his latest British tour, with the likelihood of more to follow. He plays Edinburgh Odeon (February 21), Newcastle City Hall (22), Manchester Free Trade Hall (23), Sheffield City Hall (24), Birmingham Odeon (25), London Rainbow Theatre (March 2) and Bristol Colston Hall (4).

Rainbow tickets cost £3, £2.50 and £2, and elsewhere they are £2.80, £2.40 and £1.80. Postal bookings are being accepted immediately, and box-offices open to personal callers tomorrow (Friday) — except at Sheffield and Newcastle (January 26) and Bristol (February 2).

Hillage is backed on stage by Andy Anderson (drums) and John McKenzie (bass) — both of whom worked with him on his last tour — plus a new rhythm guitarist, still to be named. And his double album "Live Herald" is released by Virgin on January 26 — it was recorded during his 1978 U.K. tour at such venues as the Rainbow and Oxford Polytechnic.

RACING CARS

RACING CARS are touring extensively for the rest of the winter, and among dates so far confirmed are Sheffield Limit Club (tonight, Thursday), Birmingham Aston University (Friday), Sunderland Polytechnic (Saturday), Wolverhampton Lafayette (January 26), Durham University (27), Bath Brillig Arts Centre (30 and 31), Newport Village Club (February 2), Birmingham Barbarella's (3), Jacksdale Grey Topper (4), Aberystwyth University (8), Middlesbrough Rock Garden (9), Nottingham Boat Club (10), Cambridge Homerton College (16) and Dudley J.B.'s (17). Many more dates have still to be finalised, running through into March.

ROD ARGENT

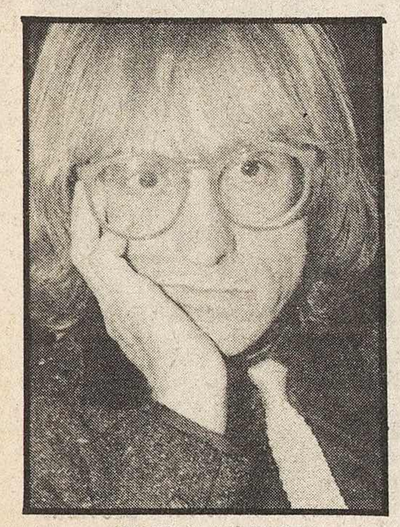
ROD ARGENT emerges from the shadows next month to play two concerts at the new London showplace, The Venue in Victoria, on February 8 and 9. The gigs are tied in with the advent of his first solo album "Moving Home", just released by MCA. He'll be appearing with a group of so-called 'Friends', who could prove to be some of the musicians on the LP — and these include Phil Collins, Gary Moore, Jack Lancaster and Alphonso Johnson. Argent also plays two other dates — at Hatfield Polytechnic (February 7) and St. Albans City Hall (10).

● Roger McGuinn, Gene Clark and Chris Hillman — founder members of the near-legendary Byrds who've been operating independently with their own bands until recently — are now working together as a trio (plus backing unit), and they come to London for three nights at The Venue starting on February 15 (admission £4). They've also signed a worldwide recording deal with Capitol, who'll be releasing their debut album — produced in Miami by Ron Howard Albert — within the next two months. No other British gigs are planned at this time.

● Moon Martin undertakes his debut U.K. concert appearances next month, including a show at The Venue on February 7. Provincial gigs lined up are at Sheffield Limit Club (6), Liverpool Eric's (9), Manchester The Factory (10) and Birmingham Barbarella's (11). His self-penned album "Shots From A Cold Nightmare" is issued by Capitol at the end of this month, preceded this weekend by a single taken from it called "Bad Case Of Lovin' You". Martin — probably best-known as composer of Mink De Ville's "Cadillac Walk" — is backed on stage by Dana Ferris and Jude Cole (guitars), Dennis Croy (bass) and Rick Croy (drums).

● Terry Reid plays his first U.K. concerts for six years when he headlines at The Venue this Friday and Saturday (19-20). He'll be backed by a pick-up band, with a line-up including former Frankie Miller bassist Chris Stewart and ex-Santana guitarist Doug Rodriguez. Reid's new Capitol album "Rogue Waves" is due out at the end of this month.

● Eddie Money, the former New York cop now turned rock-'n'roll star, makes his U.K. debut next month. He undertakes a short tour, highlighted by a gig at The Venue on February 11 — preceded by Newcastle University (7), Glasgow Strathclyde University (8), Manchester University (9) and Sheffield University (10). He also appears with his six-piece backing band in BBC-2's "Old Grey Whistle Test" on February 6. Money's new single "Maybe I'm A Fool" has just been issued by CBS, and his second album "Life For The Taking" comes out on February 9.



MOON MARTIN

● Former Traffic stalwart Jim Capaldi is set for a three-night stint at The Venue (April 13-15), and among other newly confirmed bookings are City Boy (February 10), Alicia Bridges (22-23), Maddy Prior (24) and The Albion Band (March 16-17). As already reported, Ian Matthews appears there on January 31 and Walter Egan on February 1.

AVERAGE WHITES

AVERAGE WHITE BAND are now officially confirmed for their February-March U.K. tour forecast last week. It takes in a dozen nationwide dates, kicking off with a special show at Guildford Surrey University on February 7, which is being filmed for inclusion in BBC-2's "Rock Goes To College" series. It is, in fact, the longest tour they have ever undertaken in Britain — and it's preceded this weekend by the release of their new single "Atlantic Avenue", with their latest album to follow shortly. As reported last week, they are supported by Jamaican reggae band Inner Circle, and the tour dates are:

London Rainbow (February 17 and 18), Birmingham Odeon (20), Manchester Apollo (21), Glasgow Apollo (22), Aberdeen Capitol (28), Edinburgh Odeon (March 1), Lancaster University (2), Leeds University (3), Bristol Hippodrome (5) and Brighton Dome (6). There's a good chance of further dates being added. Tickets are on sale now and priced £3.50, £3 and £2.50 (Rainbow); £2.50 only (university dates); and £3, £2.50 and £2 (elsewhere). Promoter is Harvey Goldsmith.

JOAN ARMATRADING

JOAN ARMATRADING plays two nights at the massive Wembley Arena, as part of her March tour of Britain, which also includes three shows in Birmingham and two in Manchester. The tour marks her first U.K. concerts since she appeared with Bob Dylan at Blackbushe Airport last summer, and the special guest artist on all dates is jazz-rock giant George Duke.

Dates are Glasgow Apollo (March 2), Newcastle City Hall (3), Manchester Apollo (5 and 6), Bristol Colston Hall (7), Birmingham Odeon (8 and 9), Birmingham National Exhibition Centre (10) and London Wembley Arena (12 and 13).

Tickets at all venues except London are priced £4, £3.25 and £2.50 (contact respective box-offices for details of opening dates). For Wembley, tickets go on sale this Saturday priced £4.50 and £4, and they are also available by post (cheques and POs to "Wembley Stadium Ltd." and enclose SAE). Joan will be featuring material from her current album "To The Limit" in her revised stage act.

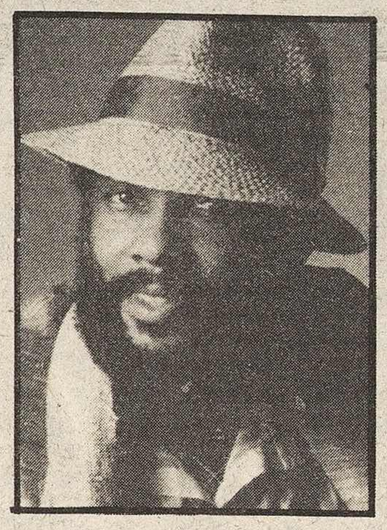
BILLY CONNOLLY

THE BIG YIN, Billy Connolly, sets out later this month on what must be one of the biggest tours of Britain ever undertaken. It runs through until late April and takes in 63 dates — so it's not surprising that he's calling it his Big Wee Tour! Connolly's new single "I Couldn't Spell . . .!" is released by Polydor this weekend as a prelude to his massive trek, and it's likely that the movie "Absolution" — in which he makes his film debut with Richard Burton — will be released during the course of the tour. His full schedule, including a week at London's Theatre Royal, was announced this week and (are you ready?) comprises:

Elgin Town Hall (January 31), **Wick** Assembly Rooms (February 1), **Dingwall** Town Hall (2), **Forfar** Reid Hall (3), **Arbroath** Webster Theatre (4), **Lanark** Memorial Hall (6), **Kilbirnie** Walker Memorial Hall (7), **Kilmarnock** Grand Hall (8), **Newton Stewart** McMillan Town Hall (9), **Hawick** Town Hall (10), **Workington** Carnegie Hall (12), **Barrow** Civic Hall (13), **Lancaster** University (14), **Durham** University (15), **Hull** City Hall (16), **Barnsley** Civic Hall (17), **Nottingham** Theatre Royal (18), **Derby** Assembly Rooms (20), **Lincoln** Theatre Royal (21), **Peterborough** ABC (22), **Northampton** Royal Theatre (25), **Canterbury** Odeon (27), **Crawley** Leisure Centre (28), **Guildford** Civic Hall (March 1), **Salisbury** City Hall (3), **Swindon** Oasis Centre (4), **Plymouth** Guildhall (5), **Taunton** Odeon (6), **Reading** Hexagon Theatre (7), **Bath** Pavilion (9), **Shrewsbury** Music Hall (10), **Chester** Gateway Theatre (11), **Burslem** Queens Theatre (12), **Southport** Theatre (13), **Blackburn** King George's Hall (14), **Doncaster** Gaumont (15), **Sheffield** City Hall (26), **Manchester** Apollo (27), **Preston** Guildhall (28), **Aberdeen** Capitol (30), **Stirling** McRobert Centre (31), **Glasgow** Theatre Royal (April 1), **Edinburgh** Usher Hall (2), **Newcastle** City Hall (3), **Leeds** City Varieties (5), **Liverpool** Empire (6), **Birmingham** Hippodrome (7), **Bristol** Hippodrome (8), **London Drury Lane** Theatre Royal (9-14 inclusive), **Oxford** New Theatre (15). **Ipswich** Gaumont (17), **Leicester** De Montfort (18), **Coventry** Theatre (19), **Bournemouth** Winter Gardens (22) and **Southampton** Gaumont (23).

ROY AYRES

ROY AYERS follows his autumn chart hit "Get On Up Get On Down" with a short British tour, starting at the end of this month and including a major London concert at the Hammersmith Odeon on February 4. Other confirmed dates are Blackpool Tiffany's (January 28), Brighton Top Rank (30), Manchester Apollo (February 2) and Dunstable California (3). A few more gigs, plus a support act, are still being finalised by promoter Barry Marshall. Ayers' new single "Heat Of The Beat", also featuring ex-Crusaders trombonist Wayne Henderson, has just been released in Polydor's "Steppin' Out" disco series.



SLIM WHITMAN

VETERAN country singer Slim Whitman returns to Britain in March, when he gives 32 shows in just over three weeks. His itinerary takes in Chelmsford Odeon (March 2), Aberdeen Capitol (4), Inverness Eden Court Theatre (5), Croydon Fairfield Hall (7), Coventry Theatre (8), Oxford New Theatre (9), Southport Theatre (10), Nottingham Theatre Royal (11), Stoke Jollees (12), Middlesbrough Town Hall (16), Bournemouth Winter Gardens (17), London Palladium (18), Wakefield Theatre Club (21), Great Yarmouth ABC (25). There are two performances nightly, except at Stoke and the London Palladium. Support acts are Canadaian country singer Caroll Baker and British band The Hillsiders, and the tour is promoted by Mervyn Conn.

IAN GILLAN

GILLAN — which, of course, is the official billing of the Ian Gillan Band — are playing a string of college dates during the current term. So far set are Aberystwyth University (January 24), Bangor University (25), Liverpool University (26), Bradford University (February 3), Edinburgh University (9), Newcastle University (10), Keele University (14), Birmingham University Mason Hall (16) and Slough College (17). Non-college gigs for the band are at Newcastle Mayfair (February 2), Bournemouth Maison Royale (21) and Nottingham Boat Club (27), and further dates will be announced shortly.

OSIBISA

OSIBISA play a short series of eight dates during the first half of next month, as the first leg of their tenth anniversary world tour. They'll be presenting their brand new show, incorporating material from their upcoming new album, due for release in the spring. Dates are Bournemouth Winter Gardens (February 2), Nottingham Playhouse (4), Aberystwyth University (5), Exeter Routes (8), Guildford Surrey University (9), Croydon Fairfield Hall (11), Plymouth Fiesta Suite (12) and Wakefield Theatre Club (14).

GRUPPO SPORTIVO

GRUPPO SPORTIVO, the Dutch rock band with the Italian name, have been lined up for another U.K. tour. It's a month-long itinerary, with Leeds-based outfit Sneakers supporting at all venues. A few more dates have still to be finalised, but those confirmed so far are Leicester University (February 6), Preston Polytechnic (7), Wakefield Unity Hall (8), Bristol University (9), Birmingham University (10), Croydon Greyhound (11), Plymouth Metro (13), Southampton University (14), Coventry Warwick University (15), Sheffield Polytechnic (16), Manchester University (17), Liverpool University (21), Middlesbrough Crypt (22), Newcastle Polytechnic (23), Glasgow Strathclyde University (24), Fife St. Andrew's University (25), Edinburgh Tiffany's (26), Bradford University (28), Leeds Polytechnic (March 1), Slough Community Centre (3), London Strand Lyceum (4) and Birmingham Barbarella's (6).

OFF THE RECORD

● **Queen,** who left yesterday (Wednesday) for a six-week European tour, have a single issued by EMI this weekend to keep the pot boiling during their absence. Titles are "Don't Stop Me Now" and "In Only Seven Days," both taken from their current album "Jazz."

● **Donna Summer's** new single is "Heaven Knows," for release by Casablanca on February 2. It's taken from her "Live & More" album.

● Blues giant **John Mayall** has signed an exclusive long-term worldwide deal with DJM Records. He already has an album in the can — produced by Bob Johnston and recorded in New York and Los Angeles — and it's planned for rush release in the very near future.

● **The Members'** first single "The Sound Of The Suburbs" is released by Virgin on January 26, pressed in clear vinyl.

● **After The Fire's** much-delayed new single "One Rule For You" is finally set for release on February 16. And from their point of view, it's been well worth the wait, because they've just signed a worldwide deal with CBS — and the single is their first product under the agreement.

● January 26 singles from Polydor include "Zeke The Freak" by **Isaac Hayes,** "Love Keeps Getting Stronger Everyday" by **Neil Sedaka,** "Get Up And Dance" by the **Steve Gibbons Band** and "Lola" by **The Rubettes,** while on affiliated labels there's "Remember" by the **Greg Kihn Band** (Beserkley) and "Fifty Four" by **Sea Level** (Capricorn). Out this weeknd on Polydor is **Lynsey de Paul's** "Tigers & Fireflies."

● **Neil Ardley,** whose last album "Kaleidoscope Of Rainbows" was widely acclaimed by the critics, has his latest work "Harmony Of The Spheres" issued by Decca on February 2. He'll be performing it on LW-TV's "South Bank Show" this Sunday (21) when he's joined by John Martyn (guitar) and Barbara Thompson (woodwind).

● **Dead Fingers Talk,** currently recording a new album, have their single "This Crazy World" issued by Pye on February 9. They play London Kensington Nashville next Tuesday (23) as their last gig before leaving for a U.S. tour on February 6.

ELO's Violinski

ELO violinist Mik Kaminski has formed a five-piece band called Violinski. Other members are former Rick Wakeman drummer John Hodgson, John Marcangelo (percussion and keyboards), Baz Dunnery (guitar and vocals) and ex-Fairport Convention and Wizzard member Robert Brady (lead guitar and vocals). They have been working together for a couple of years, but have only just finished recording due to Kaminski's ELO commitments. Their first single "Clog Dance" is released by Jet on January 26, followed by their debut album "No Cause For Alarm" in March. And during the coming year, several other members of ELO will be releasing product of their own.

● Stiff Records are releasing all the **Devo** titles they own on a special six-track LP called "B Stiff". It's available through the label's retail outlet — Secret Service, 32 Alexander Street, London W.2 — priced £1.99 to personal callers (add 40p if ordering by mail). Tracks are "Jocko Homo", "Satisfaction", "Be Stiff", "Mongoloid", "Sloppy" and "Social Fools".

● Scheduled for release within the next few weeks on Polydor's new Steppin' Out 12-inch disco series are a **James Brown** double A-side featuring full-length versions of "Sex Machine" and "Take A Look At Those Cakes"; and a three-track from **Millie Jackson** including an extended mix of "My Man Is A Sweet Man" and the full-length "All .The Way Lover". The label is also launching a series of Steppin' Out disco nights throughout the U.K., starting at London Strand Lyceum on January 29.

● Near legendary rocker **Chuck Berry** has signed a long-term deal with America's Atco label, distributed in Britain by Atlantic. He is now recording an album for his new oultlet, with details to be announced shortly.

● Real Records signings **The Pretenders,** featuring Chrissie Hynde, have their debut single "Stop Your Sobbing" issued this weekend. Producer was Nick Lowe, and the song was penned by Ray Davies of The Kinks.

BOB DYLAN AT BUDOKAN

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JON KING, ANDY GILL exhibit stalwart forward stance.

THE GANG OF FOUR deliver a resolute rebuff to the reactionary forces of obscurantism in the far flung people's province of Kum-bri-a

In the rebel Ford Transit: ADRIAN THRILLS

Poster Campaign: PENNIE SMITH

THE YEAR OF THE GREAT LEAP FOUR-WARDS

I WOKE UP one morning, little knowing that a few hours later I'd be counting the four dimly-lit yellow walls of a muggy police cell in Kendal, Cumbria, suspected, along with The Gang Of Four, their two roadies and vocalist Jon King's girlfriend, of possessing drugs that none of us knew a thing about.

The trials, tediums and tribulations of life 'on the road' are encrusted in rocklore legend. But I never thought my own weekend with the last gang in town would finish up behind bars.

The fun and games began early that afternoon (Sunday) as The Mekons' "Where Were You" stuttered from the cassette player that made the wearying motorway journeys seem a little shorter.

We were on our 100-mile trek back to The Gang Of Four's Leeds home base, and about half a dozen miles out of the Drizzly grey Lake District town where they'd played the previous night.

That was when the Cumbria Constabulary patrol car brought our maroon transit to an abrupt halt.

Within minutes, two police cars appeared and detectives were swarming.

"Hello, we're getting warmer," smirked one. He lifted a green Rizla packet from the dashboard. "Sometimes it's hard work. It might take a little time, but we'll get there in the end."

An escorted drive back to Kendal police station. All eight of us were interrogated, photographed, fingerprinted, strip-searched and generally made to feel like dollops of dehydrated dog dung.

We were informed that a search of the van in the courtyard ouside had unearthed a small ball of canabis resin, found, it was claimed, under one of the front seats.

Hugo Burnham, the band's stocky, ex-actor drummer, looked down at the scarf hanging from his waist. He just couldn't belive it.

"I was loading stuff back into the van after the search," he told me later. "One of the policemen called me around to the front and produced the lump of canabis covered in silver paper and asked me if I'd ever seen it. I just hit the roof. I'd never seen it before in my life!"

Hugo had been allowed to oversee the drug squad officers during most though — he claims — not all of their van search.

The interviewers who confronted each of us in turn across the questioning room table got the same story eight times over; no-one had seen it before in their lives.

By 9.20 pm we were bailed on suspicion, six hours after first setting foot in the station.

Whatever comes of the incident, I feel I have been the target of an unwarranted invasion of privacy ...

GIGS IN outposts of civilization like Kendal often take place in unlikely-looking venues. So it came as no surprise the night before our Sunday 'Bust' to find the hottest unsigned band in the country on a miniscule stage in front of no more than a couple of hundred people in a craft workshop-cum-theatre complex known as Kendal Brewery Arts Centre.

Onstage, The Gang Of Four are dynamite: the rocketing energy level as they tore into the chorus of the opening song, "Essence Rare", had nothing to do with the piles of atomic waste at the Winscale just down the road — but a hell of a lot to do with guitarist Andy Gill's clipped, rapid-fire Wilkochords and the lockjaw rhythmic bedrock of drummer Hugo and bassist Dave Allen.

On "Essence Rare" and other originals like "Elevator", "Tourist", "Glass" and "Armalite Rifle", The Gang Of Four are rapidly becoming the finest hard-rock dance band since The Sex Pistols. Vocalist Jon King moves like a wired and wonderful hybrid of Faye Fife and John Travolta, arms windmilling from a smocklike glossy black mac.

He describes the music as "perverted disco". Watching him, it's hard to argue.

The Gang Of Four work largely within traditional rock structures but imbue a gnawing disorientation that's far more subtle and effective than most of the self-consciously weird dabblings and avant garde postures of the quick-quick-slow-screech-bubble-fart brigade.

Bracketing them with the troops of the 'Bleak', 'Modern' Grey New Wave is far too simple and inaccurate a categorisation. It's also an insult to their corporate zap and flair: how many bands working in the same supposed off-centre area could accomodate the unrelenting raucousness of The Rezillos "I Can't Stand My Baby" or The Mekons' brilliant love song "Rosanne" into their scheme of things?

Not many for sure, but The Gang Of Four worked both into their encores.

As the emaciated, alert guitarist Gill

■ *Continues over page*

HUGO BURNHAM, DAVE ALLEN mock running dogs

CULTURAL REVOLUTION CONTD.

■ *From previous page*

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Not many for sure, but The Gang Of Four worked both into their encores.

As the emaciated, alert guitarist Gill explains: "The avant garde way is to reject everything so that you can be seen as being totally different, cutting out everything that sounds like anything else and losing all rhythm and beat along the way.

"What you should be doing," he continues in assertive South London monotone, "is looking to music and picking out the ideas you think are good. As far as I'm concerned, Wilko Johnson's style of guitar say, is the most important way that has emerged over the last few years. It's interesting to try and use elements of that and, say, elements of reggae playing together . . . pulling the most important strands together."

Jon King: "Years ago all I ever listened to was Tamla Motown and early reggae.

"Basically, it was black music. That's why, musically, we're a mixture of all sorts of things without being, hopefully, a rip-off of any of them. We're trying to put in as much of our own musical history as possible.

"Avant gardism has got to the stage now where it just represents unlimited individualism where anyone can do what the fuck they want and 'Bollocks' to everyone else. That's the attitude of Throbbing Gristle, say . . . the typical, classic 'artists' attitude."

"Obviously, people must express themselves, but that doesn't mean telling everyone else that they're idiots, which is the implicit argument of the avant garde . . . I'm better than you".

At the other end of the scale to their relatively straight, immediately accessible rock songs are two sparse, stripped drum and bass rhythms, "Talkover", on which Andy Gill switches his guitar for a place behind the drum kit, and the frigid "5.45".

Both are embellished by Jon King's melodica, redolent of a Rolf Harris Stylophone in its tackiness, and overlain by two stark monologues recited deadpan by Hugo Burnham and Andy Gill.

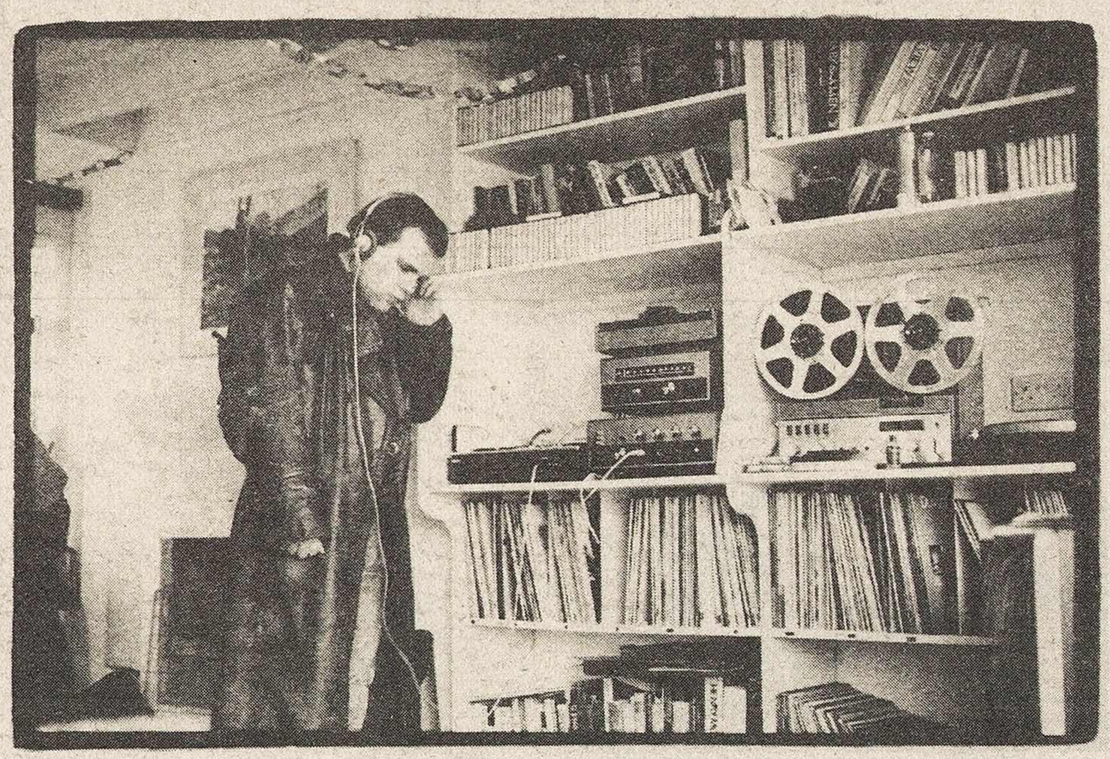
They are an immensely enjoyable band to watch but, and here's the rub, care much too much about a lot of things to be content with just pushing A Good Time For One And All.

THE NAME Gang Of Four — a heist from the so-called 'Gang' that attempted to seize control in the post-Mao political power struggle of China — was suggested by Mekons' vocalist Andy while they were shopping in Leeds.

The intentional leftist connotations have already led to the band being glibly dismissed as a "bunch of Commies" by more reactionary sectors of the rock press.

Although Gill and King have been in bands together since secondary school, the present unit came together less than two years ago when the singer and guitarist, both studying Fine Art at Leeds University, met up with English student Burnham who was endeavouring to get his own fringe theatre company, Impact, off the ground.

(As recently as last autumn, Burnham left the group for a while to concentrate on acting activities).



Hu-go listens to broadcast from local cadre.

Bassist Dave Allen, then working as a long-distance lorry driver, joined through an advert on the university notice board.

None of the band — or any of their close mates The Mekons for that matter — actually come from Leeds. Gill, King and Burnham are all from the Kent/South London border, while Allen isfrom the Lake District, where he served a lengthy musical apprenticeship in working men's club showbands.

My first encounter with them came 12 months back at a Buzzcocks gig in Leeds — on which they were supporting. I noted them as definitely worth keeping tabs on, although I was dismayed at their apparent unwillingness to communicate with the audience.

Too many Wireisms perhaps?

The cataclysmic improvement since those grey days is due to a marked change in attitude. The Gang today are positive, progesssive and tentatively outward-looking.

Gill: A year ago we were going through a rough patch and we were all really worried about it. I admired The Mekons a lot at the time for their ability to get on with the audience. We had to force ourselves to open out, make ourselves a bit more vulnerable.

"I don't like groups like the Banshees who hide behind a lot of style and make-up that prevents them from getting hurt. If you open yourselves out you make yourselves more human by making yourself more vulnerable.

"The Banshees are all signs — all form and no content. They don't stand for anything. It's more like selling fashions. The lyrics just point to anything that sounds esoteric or weird."

Jon King: "When we first started we used to all get completely paralytic drunk before we went on stage and we used to go absolutely bananas, trashing mikes and leaping around. It soon became obvious that that approach wasn't working, so we thought instead, 'I've got to stand still', just to avoid fitting into the rock performer stereotype.

"I think we've found our level more now. We enjoy being onstage and we enjoy playing. That's half the battle of getting across.

"The Gang Of Four are not an avant garde band, pushing ideas that aren't available to everyone else. We're not trying to be superior. What we're trying to do is use a form everyone can recognise, rock music, and introduce elements that haven't been introduced before but in a way that other people can understand.

"We're not trying to create ideas for a small elite."

The Gang Of Four — who have a social conscience and vehemently refuse to use their music as pure escapism — have come under heavy fire from some quarters for "Armalite Rifle", their indignant condemnation of government-sponsored repression in Ulster.

Gill: "I think it's a terrible myth that you can only sing about your direct experience . . . like Pete Shelly can only sing about his love affairs. You can talk about songs that effect anybody.

"We've got as much right to sing about South Africa, Northern Ireland, Leeds or London as anybody else — Northern Ireland particularly because we live in Britain and there are things being done in Northern Ireland in our name because they are being done by the Government which we supposedly elect. We've got a responsibility to stand up and say if we don't agree with those things.

"It's the same with anything. We are aiming to make people reconsider certain things. We're not just taking a journalistic attitude. That's the trouble with the avant garde again. They sit on the fence, never actually saying if something is actually right or wrong, just presenting it.

"We're not just presenting things. Neutrality is a load of shit. We are saying if we think something is right or wrong. I mean, people can still take it or leave it.

"But, like I was saying in the cell last night, we don't want to be seen as leaders or a sort of grey matter, finger pointing and showing an answer. We're with people rather than above them."

King: "Take Tom Robinson. Although there may be criticisms of his sloganeering, he's working in a area closer to us than 99 per cent of rock bands. I would never want to criticise the guy because he's struggling. He's not coming out with the sexicst crap that most bands do.

"People have accused us of being 'too male', but I think we look quite assexual on stage. We certainly reject the stereotyped macho poses. Like, that coat I wear is baggy and shapeless and Andy never uses the guitar as a phallus, which is one of rock's sexist assumptions — cock rock.

"It's important that we don't become the sexual stereotype of a male band."

In keeping with King's distaste for romanticised rock and roll fable, The Gang Of Four's songs about lurve won't exactly have all soft-hearted souls reaching for that box of Kleenex on the windowsill.

Cases in point are "Love Like Anthrax" and "Damaged Goods", the latter originally titled "Love Not Lust", both of which appeared on last year's Fast Product EP.

"Your kiss so sweet/ Your sweat so sour/ Sometimes I'm thinking that I love you/ But I know it's only lust"

Underneath its wry humour "Damaged Goods" sounds an incredibly inhumane song. I asked Andy Gill if they were worried about the lyrics being misconstrued as a Stranglers-class ode to the king stud.

"Hopefully there's enough information elsewhere in the song," comes the reply, "to indicate that it's not meant to be read like that."

What then?

"It's about the sociological myth of love, which is about spending, merchandising, looking on other people as objects and pretending that there's this romantic idea that you're going to get something rewarding out of it."

THE LAST TIME I saw the Gang of Four they were in the BBC studios in Maida Vale, London, recording the four tracks of their first John Peel show session.

You should have seen the faces of the house engineers at the mixing desk as all four members of the band danced, faces beaming with delight, as they clustered around two microphones to lay down an overdubbed vocal track for '"Return The Gift", a gem of a song built around a hypnotic two-note guitar motif and an absolutely irrestible disco bass line.

The session, which also features "Essence Rare", "5.45" and "Tourist", is a compulsive indication of just how well the Gang of Four are going to record in their present mood.

On the verge of a major company deal - everything should be sewn up and on the news pages by the beginning of next month — the group are taking a month off before they think about things like shifting units of product. Yes, the revolution will be vinylised, but they are in no great hurry.

And, oh, I almost forgot. They've all got wonderful sense of humour and Dave and Hugo fart a lot.

WHETHER The Gang Of Four's admirable egalitarian ideals can survive the forthcoming assimilation into the rockbiz machine with all its personality cult pratfalls remains to be seen. But their resolve to be seen as A Band rather than one or two 'personalities' with a couple of backing musicians is positively hard-headed.

Dave Allen: "It boils down to democracy. We are actually four people. We don't want to be seen in the same way as, say, Ian Dury And The Blockheads. Like Ian Dury has an amazing band, but they're just a band — he's the focal point."

Andy Gill has no illusions about the rockstar syndrome.

"If you're on a stage and people are coming to see you it seems inevitable that you'll get treated as something special.

"I think it's bad, right, but I can't see how to avoid it. Our responsibility is to examine that — the thing about playing roles and being looked up to — and work within that. The fact that we change roles onstage and people play different individual instruments might, hopefully, encourage people not to regard us as 'stars'."

Although King and Gill write most of the lyrics, all songs are credited to the band and even mild-mannered manger Rob Warr is listed as a fifth member of the band in all business contracts, a partnership idea they have in common with The Pop Group.

During our interview — conducted in Hugo Burnham's Leeds flat — the group prove cooperative though wary of being misunderstood; eager and articulate.

Hugo disappears into his kitchen for coffee to dispel the general sullen air of the morning after the ordeal and then returns to point out that "there isn't a specific Gang Of Four politic, a Gang Of Four ideal, a Gang Of Four whatever . . ."

"Just broad areas of agreement," murmurs Gill.

In fact many of the band's day-to-day problems and general policies are ironed out in cooperative meetings with buddies The Mekons, yet another area in which the two bands veer from accepted norms of rock administration.

The relationship between the two is uniquely close. Since 1977 they've shared a rehearsal room, built a shared PA from scratch and gigged together continually. Gill even drummed on the first ever Mekons gig, when the band were still one member short.

Their loose cooperative has recently been extended to include a Mekon satellite, Delta Five, and a further offshoot group, Another Colour. It seems likely to continue growing.

Gill: "It came about from us all being close friends. The Mekons formed shortly after us. When we were doing our first rehearsals, they'd get up when we went for a break and use the gear. When we came back we'd find them making this horrible noise."

King: "Then, it was a very fluid thing. It moved more towards a cooperative as The Mekons became more of a settled, serious group. At first they weren't entirely serious. They thought about their first gig as more of a one-off."

Burnham: "It's not a strict cooperative. The meetings we do have are not that regular. It's not a registered cooperative or anything like that."

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THRILLS

THE REVOLUTION WILL NOT HAVE A SOUNDTRACK . . .

THIS BEING a boom time both for black music and more generally for 'political' music, you could guess that someone — probably white — sooner or later would realise that South Africa had both black people and pressure politics in abundance, and that the fruits must be there for samplers.

This also being a time when black music is returning to a sense of pre-imperialist identity, locating present tension in relation to past history — roots — obviously The General Public should be introduced to black South African music *before it's too late.*

Rhythm Of Resistance: — a documentary by Jeremy Marre (also responsible for the BBC's *Roots, Rock, Reggae* which is now showing with *Dread Beat & Blood* at London's Scala Cinema) and Chris Austin — was , shown on LWT's *South Bank Show* on Sunday. A soundtrack of the same name is to be marketed by Virgin (see *Albums).* The question is — what came first?

The most vital facet of this package is the *presentation.* Because it's not the music which is new, but the audience (the music, or a lot of it, has been there all the time on import). For that, we must thank the promotion.

So: the black music of South Africa is alive. Or is it?

Rhythm Of Resistance was surprisingly lacking in pressure. I'm not sure whether I ought to blame the film unit for this, or the apartheid system, which — especially after the Soweto race riots in 1976 — must constantly aim to abort any pressure pon de streets. But then, the film's only concession to this context — which must have shaped the film regardless — was a hint in the spoken introduction that, the usual wet liberal stuff, they'd filmed in areas where whitey wasn't supposed to go and that Babylon (S.African police) wasn't very happy about that ...

It was a standard arty documentary about a vital subject which chose to neglect all the links, implications, history, and politics in favour of agreeable images — just like some old benevolent newsreel: the black boy goes to work, the black boy goes to school, the black boy goes back to his homeland, the black boy picks up his guitar.

The black boy in question was Sipho, who sang protest songs — "Yes I'm running but I don't fear the gun" — and worked as a gardener on the estate of a Mr. Harry Oppenheimer, where, twice a week, he also attended a school to learn

DANGEROUS VISIONS

English — along with Mr. Oppenheimer's 79 other gardeners. "After the Soweto uprisings in 1976," ran the commentary, "many white housewives felt the need to do something for their servants."

Blacks can only stay in a white area for up to 72 hours without having an employer to sign their papers — the whole o' we suffer: from country to country, Africa to America.

After all black music was exported to America with slavery (England exported racism to America with the Pilgrim Fathers). The parallels were obvious, with your footage of black work gangs singing "The white be damned! They call us Jim!" and suspicious Afrikans looking on.

There were parallels also with *this* country, with the mid-'50s when West Indian emigrees were brought into G.B. to fill up all the dirtier unskilled posts (cue Thatcher defining "Britishness") — and back, if you want, to the English invasion / occupation of Ireland and Scotland, where families and communities were cleared from the land to fill the purses of the absentee aristocracy (which stays in Ireland to this day in the shape of Her army).

In short — Imperial economy and racial exploitation have always gone hand in hand; black African music has always been excluded from the production of Western musical discourse and been defined purely as a function of 'primitive' parameters, and the Western media is notoriously adept at denying inter-relationships and separating political, cultural, and social histories.

This is a time when blacks across the globe are finding a political identity, and finding that it is inseparable from a cultural one — Rastarafi in JA and England, some of the new jazz in America like Anthony Braxton and the AACM, the Revolutionary Ensemble, etc, and long-standing visionaries like Gil Scott Heron & Taj Mahal — all have realised Africa is where it crystallises, where it began.

The very idea that when you go to play a piece of music the actual outcome of it is not shaped — a concept inherent in both dub and 'free jazz' — has its roots in the percussion of Africa.

But was this dealt with *Rhythm Of Resistance?*

In comes the newsreel voice, telling us that the music isn't "overtly political", the 'resistance' speaks through the subtleties of sound and tone, allegory and legend. Dem clever coons.

The South African recording industry and the radio are of course controlled by the state, which imposes a harsh political censorship; programmes are pre-recorded and censored and are little more than spaces for government propaganda and commercials ... which reminds *me* of switching on my fave commercial station last week only to hear a frothy magazine programme headed off by 'regular guest speaker' Lord George Brown, who started off on his holidays and ended up with a hysterical diatribe against the leftist conspiracy which was bringing this great nation to its knees.

Rhythm Of Resistance was shot as though racism was *here* and reconciliation (or revolution) was *there,* with music occupying some floating space between the two — as though South Africa were *there* and Great Britain *here* with nothing between them at all (remember *we* exported Smith to Rhodesia).

"The music," ran the newsreel, "is ultimately in the hands of white businessmen."

Rhythm Of Resistance was directed by Richard Branson.

IAN PENMAN

THRILLS

MEANWHILE, BACK IN PUNK MOVIELAND . . .

BELFAST'S PUNK scene is one of the few left in the British Isles to retain any semblance of the ethics which spawned a movement back in 76-77.

Maybe the reason is the city's physical size (small compared to other major British towns), maybe it's the growing interest in the city as a musical landmark of national renown or possibly there is a greater need among Belfast kids for recreational excitement. It's probably a combination of all three.

Whatever, the communal spirit in which almost everyone knows everyone else has led to a proliferation of bands and the prolific output of the Good Vibes label — with only one duff release to date.

Such an atmosphere surely cries out to be recorded for posterity. And now it's going to be.

Following a best forgotten expose on local TV last year, which tackled the subject in a typically sub-Fleet St. style, and a few scrappy but enjoyable video tapes made by the local branch of Community Media, local bands and punters have been filmed over the past two months for an as-yet untitled documentary on the Belfast scene.

With help from friends, the film is being made by John Davis who for the past two years has been running operations from a home-based firm called Holywood Films — Holywood! being a town four miles north-east of Belfast.

The company's past output ranges from industrial, commercial and evangelical promotional flicks to a documentary on a long-distance swimmer. Surely the latest choice of subject is a far cry from industrial progress and bible baiting?

"Those sort of films are the bread and butter," says John. "The punk film was made for enjoyment. Not for one minute did I expect to make any money."

While not exactly made on a shoestring budget, the film was made possible by an Arts Council grant and the fact that those working on it didn't ask for payment. Davis is entering the picture in this year's international Cork film festival, and is also confident that it will be shown on national TV.

Not originally a new wave buff, he now talks enthusiastically about an unknown quantity called The Parasites, filmed at a West Belfast youth club, and genuinely revels in playing back soundtracks from the likes of Protex.

JOHN DAVIS

"It was like a romance — I was wooed by the whole thing. I've a whole collection of records that just bore me now after doing the punk film."

The project grew from a desire to simply film a group in performance and see how it worked out. However after being contacted to do publicity shots of Stiff Little Fingers and spending some time at a couple of the band's gigs Davis realised there was more going down than he was previously aware of.

"There's more to Belfast than just bombs and all that shit. People should be shown this. Perhaps it's naive to see the punk thing as a peace initiative on the part of the kids, but there is at least a unifying force."

He found the Belfast rock fraternity only too willing to co-operate and the roving lens has certainly captured a representative cross-section of Belfast rock'n'roll, good and bad.

There's some marvellously sweaty and atmospheric footage of The Undertones at The Pound Club, The Outcasts in the recording studio playing their first single, "You're A Disease", The Androids, Victim, Rhesus Negative at The Harp Bar, Rudi rehearsing and Protex playing the excellent "Strange Obsessions".

In addition there are interviews with fans and two kids discussing the problems of wearing your hair shortish and your jeans narrow in a para-military stronghold (which for obvious reasons may not be shown).

Terri Hooley exuberantly explains how Good Vibes record label was born and then proceeds to bounce around to the first aural affirmation of Belfast's musical prowess in the '70s — "Big Time" by Rudi.

And there's a whole lot more besides.

All told there's 15 hours of material — to be edited down to 50 minutes. It's not an enviable task when you consider that each band is to be given one song with which to showcase their talents.

This means goodbye to the bulk of a sizzling set by The Undertones, the only non-Belfast band.

John assures me the film will not present any theme of his own, but will simply document what is happening in Belfast.

In conjunction with the Good Vibes label, a 12-inch EP from the film's soundtrack is to be released sometime around March — when the film should also be all synched up and ready to go.

Meanwhile if any of you hipsters want to investigate the possibility of the film being shown at your local cinema, youth or Darby and Joan club, John can be reached at this address:

John Davis, Holywood Films, 14 Seapark Road, Holywood, Co. Down, Northern Ireland.

GAVIN MARTIN

THRILLS

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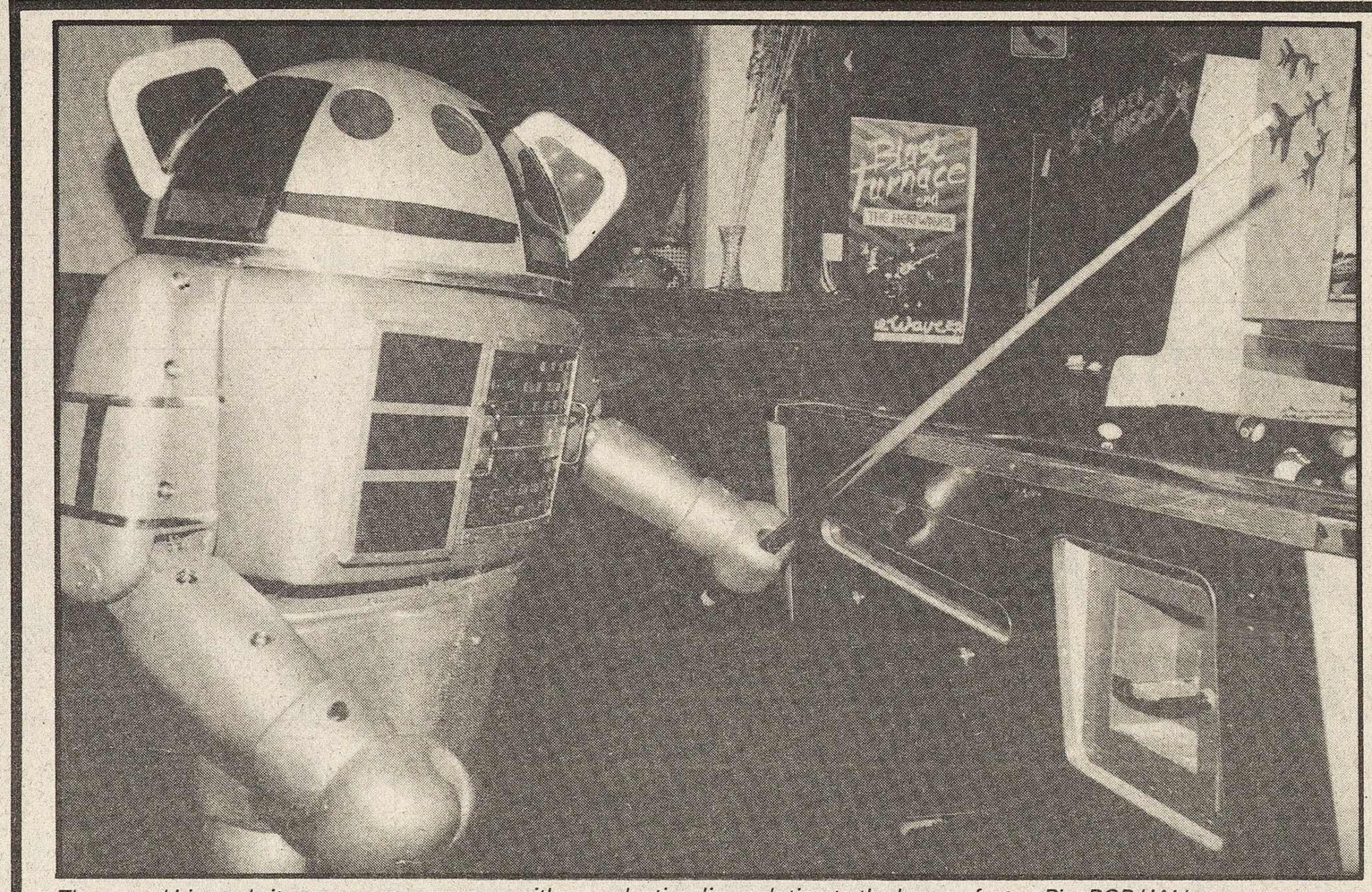


The record biz pools its resources, comes up with a production-line solution to the human factor. Pic: ROB HALL.

"Anything Donna Summer can do, I can do better"

— including play pool and have hit records. THRILLS meets the ultimate disco idol.

"TRY to think of me as human," says Metal Mickey, "and I'll try to think of you as human."

Leaning low over the pool table at East London's Hollywood Studios, the four-foot-high chart-bound cybernetic wonder flicks a casual cue. A spot-ball disappears into a corner pocket.

I've never played pool with a robot before. My game has gone to pieces, I hack clumsily at a solid colour. There is a frenzied clicking, like Phil McNeill trying to lay out a *Thrills* page minus his handy tube of Steradent. Another spot-ball is pocketed. Game, more or less, to Metal Mickey.

I've never interviewed a robot before.

Please God I never do so again.

"How do you know when a robot's been in the ice-box?" asks Metal Mickey, discarding the cue and returning to his place in the centre of the recreation room with a whirring of servos.

I don't know. Tell me.

"It leaves its footprints in the butter."

I testily remind the rotund machine of Isaac Asimov's *soi-disant* "First Law of Robotics" — to wit, that no robot shall take any action which causes harm to come to a pukka human bean. Mickey is unrepentant. He reels off his patter, a melange of ghastly jokes and manic rabbitting. I flinch under the barrage, all the time searching the room for evidence of external assistance, radio-link-wise. Nothing is to be found.

"Looking for something?" asks the robot, swivelling on his castors and rotating his dome-shaped head to fix me with a red glare from two articulated eyeballs.

Damn right I am. Your operator. Let's see — he's not under this counter. Nor is he in this cupboard. Nor, again, is he lurking behind this door.

I give up. Where is he?

"Where is who?"

Your operator, you mechanical horror.

"I have no operator." I know Mickey is lying, but am temporarily unable to furnish evidence. Slyly, I return to the attack.

How much do you weigh?

"About 200 pounds."

Who made you?

"Mummy and daddy."

Very bloody funny (still looking, by the way, to no avail).

Mickey's cover story is as follows: created on the planet Robon, he ended up on earth, in a closed packing case. Liberated from these confining spaces, he immediately expressed a determination to become a rock'n'roll star. The trackway to stardom began with an Intergalactic Rock Show at London's Tower Hotel (also appearing: Darth Vader) to which no less than six TV producers were invited by Mickey's manager, Hollywood Studios proprietor John Edward. The result was that all six, mesmerised by the bewitching robot, made various offers. The best of these was the 10-appearance contract for BBC TV's *Saturday Banana* (actually only eight, due to the BBC strike).

While Mickey is telling me this, I seize the opportunity to peer inside his casing. There is nobody inside. In fact, so small is the interior space that not even Max Bell could cram into it. And yet . . . and yet, this damn machine answers every question I put with absolute fluency; appears to know precisely what I am doing; and otherwise displays an uncanny mental awaremess and physical articulation.

It *has* to be a con. But how?

I'm buggered if I know.

"C'mon," snaps the machine. "Interview me. I thought you were a journalist."

Very well. Got any gigs lined up?

"Certainly. I've been offered 26 more *Saturday Bananas*. Plus a pilot for Southern TV, with a possible 13-week series to follow."

Congratulations, I'm sure.

"And I may well be doing the Cosmic O Show at Earl's Court. Not definitely. Possibly."

A minion now enters. "Mickey? Telephone. It's *Jim'll Fix It.*" The robot commands the minion to pass on this vital call to manager John Edward, lurking (significantly, we have not seen him) somewhere in the building. The menial disappears.

"And I've been offered a seaside summer season," adds the robot, waving its stubby arms in the air and spinning on its axis with a creaking of machinery.

You need a spot of three-in-one up your rectal canal, you automaton you.

"Thank you. You are warm and wonderful."

Most recent TV appearance of Metal Mickey was on BBC-TV's *Nationwide*. The occasion was uplifted for viewers by the sight of the four-foot high robot putting its metal arm up the back of the skirt of the personette trying to interview it, simultaneously singing its current single "Lollipop".

By the way, how are sales going?

For a supposedly ingenious machine, the robot now displays a surprising amount of worldly cool. "Well, sales are hard to assess at this point in time. It's only been out for about a week. Really can't say. It's early days. You know how it is."

Got you, you metal bastard. Now I *know* you're human. No mere machine could say anything half so mechanical.

I leap to my feet. One final exploratory move — and suddenly it all falls into place.

I realise how it's done.

The robot blinks at me. "I'm at your mercy. Promise not to reveal my secret."

Oh all right.

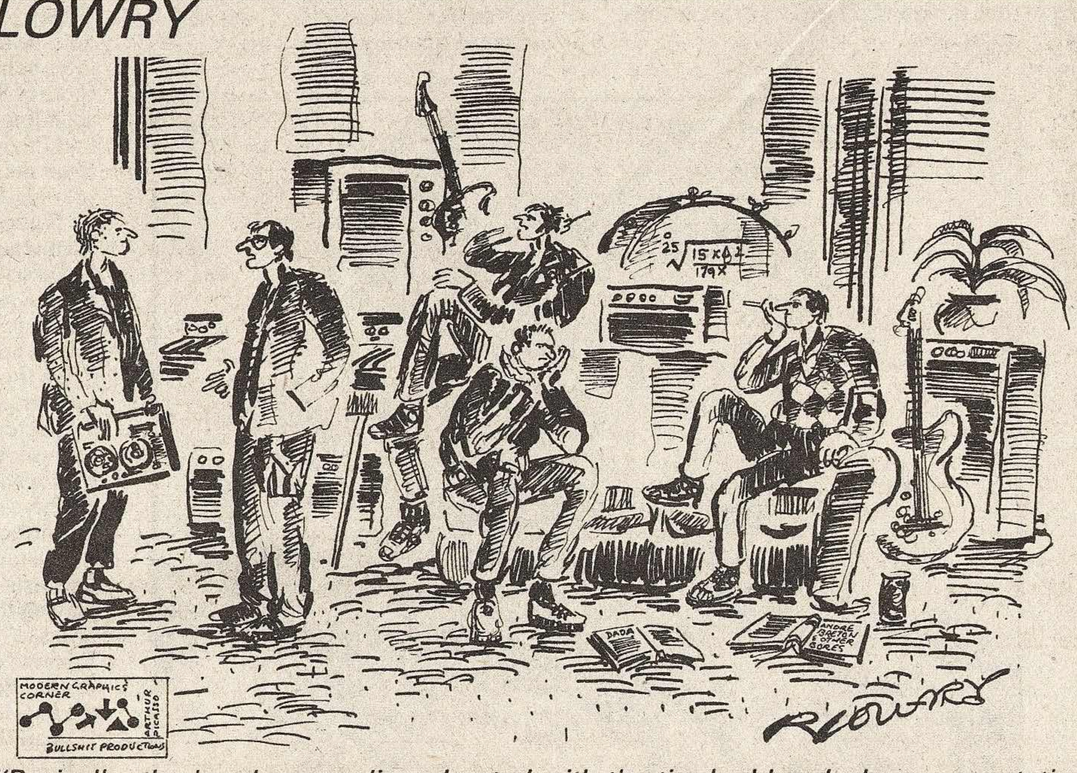
Your secret is safe with me.

For the time being.

R. D. LAING

THRILLS

LOWRY



"Basically, the band are so disenchanted with the tired, old rock show presentation cliches and outmoded musical forms that they don't actually perform at all, but sit around all day pondering the meaning of life and looking intense."

ABBA'S Anna Vulvaeus .

"And I thought she was just famous for a nice bum," says our spotter Phil Gill of Hastings. Seen in the sexy soaraway Sun.

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Above: ALAN ARKUCH directs THE RAMONES in "Rock'n'Roll Highschool". Right: ROGER CORMAN does the pink cadillac walk. Pix: PHILIPPE GARNIER.

ON SET WITH THE RAMONES

HOLLYWOOD HIGH'S COOL

THE RAMONES have been in Southern California for the past five weeks, opening for Black Sabbath in a Long Beach stadium (!), getting pelted with bottles in San Berdoo, and also — wait for it — playing The Ramones in a movie titled *Rock'n'Roll Highschool.*

Dat's right: *Thrills* wasn't kidding you the other week. DA RAMONES are gonna be inna MOVIE.

Rock'n'Roll Highschool is a bona fide good old EXPLOITATION FILM produced by the King of the Quickies himself, Mister 42nd Street: Roger Corman.

Yes, that's right — the man who bought you the Edgar Poe Follies of 1963, bike movies, young nurses, bloody mamas and women in jail; the same one who in 1968 brought you *Psych-Out,* the definitive shlocky Hollywood look at Flower Power, complete with The Seeds and Strawberry Alarm Clock playing in the park, Nicholson wearing a headband and Bruce Dern playing his very first burnt-out freak.

Let's visit the set.

It's 10 a.m. in downtown L.A. and already hot. Corman's New World Pictures are shooting in front of The Mayan. And The Ramones are bored. The call was for 8.00 but they won't do their first shot before noon.

The Mayan, on South Hill, is a movie house specialising in Mexican softcore, but today its marque screams ROCKATORIUM PRESENTS THE RAMONES and director Alan Arkuch is filming a ticket-line scene.

The extras are volunteers — Ramones fans or movie-struck idiots — and that ticket line is the worst casting-job you ever saw: there's even a beer-gutted genuine hippy in sandals and leather craft in the queue.

Meanwhile, in front of a trailer in a nearby parking lot, The Ramones wait and talk to the fans. A little. Dee Dee and new drummer Mark seem to be competing for the Great Stone Face Award. But fortunately Johnny'll talk to anyone.

They're all in regulation tatters'n'leathers — except Joey, who sports a white T-shirt and tiny pink McGuinn specs.

It's Joey who gives me the facts: "Yeah, it's a movie with a story and all that . . . There's this bunch of kids in their highschool, they're all fans of The Ramones and they use The Ramones to sorta . . . rebel against the schoolboard, against the authorities. But like, there's, a lot of gags, y'know, like in front of that ticket-line there's gonna be this INDIAN, and someone asks him what the hell he's doing here and the Injun says "I'm a scalper" . . . y'know, kinda dumb, but it's FONNY.

"It's so dumb it's right . . . And that director, he's just like us, he's nuts. He took us to his place the other night and showed us *Help* and all that . . ."

One o'clock — and the crew is ready for The Ramones. The camera truck precedes the band, who ride in a battered pink Cadillac. There are a lot of re-takes, and every time the car and truck have to drive around three blocks because of a one-way sign.

The Ramones are supposed to pull in front of the theatre and get mobbed; they're also supposed to fake playing "I Just Want To Have Something To Do". Joey is clutching a box of southern fried Chicken Vindaloo that the prop-girl brought hours ago.

The pink Caddy is shabbily upholstered in 100 per cent nylon leopard and the New York licence plates read "GABBA-GABBA-HEY".

The driver is 'rock personality' and DJ Rodney Bingenheimer, who has been pestering Joey all morning because he wants a line in the movie.

"Maybe I could say something like 'Here we are'," he whimpers.

Two Chicano kids sit on stools at the hot-dog joint across from the Mayan. One asks: "The Ramones? Whoozat?" "Some rock group." Right on cue the truck and the Caddy make the corner; the p.a. starts blaring "I Just Want To Have Something To Do".

Mark is almost sunk behind his snare-drum. Dee Dee looks surly. They're boiling inside their leather jackets under that California Sun like crabs in the shell. The crowd of extras goes bananas beyond the call of duty. Alan Arkuch stands on the truck, thumbs up. The take is good. The two kids pick their teeth, shake their heads and leave.

Surely Hollywood never used to be like this . . .?

Yeah, well, I suppose you want hard facts: The Ramones sing about six numbers in the movie, plus the theme song, "Rock'n'Roll Highschool", and some of the songs were to be taped and filmed with a live audience at the Roxy the next day. New World Pictures is aiming for an April release.

The right kind of movie? The right kind of dumb? We'll see.

PHILIPPE GARNIER

THRILLS

5.45 The Didn't Quite Make It in Time for Christmas Video Show

KENNY EVERETT

Kenny's back with his own special brand of video magic. As usual he's got the best of the pop world with him— Rod Stewart, Leo Sayer and Dead Friedman.

RESEARCHER MARTIN ROBERTSON: DESIGNER BILL LASLETT: ASSOCIATE PRODUCER BRIDGET MOORE: DIRECTOR/ PRODUCER DAVID MALLET

Thames Television Production

Mr Friedman takes a turn for the worse in TV Times. Our contributor S. Weekes says he watched the show to see if Dean would "live up" to his new name, but he wasn't even on. A grave turn of events.

COMPETITION RESULTS

WE SHOULDA guessed when we asked youse Ramones fans ta supply a caption fer our picher of Joey (the shy, gangly one in da Christmas *NME),* dat we would be da recipients of lotsa relentlessly D-U-M-B retorts.

To the pinhead who sent in two replies for the price of his 9p stamp (one alluding to Joey's inability to count up to two and the fudging effect this would have on Ramones intros and soundchecks, the other referring to the recent whereabouts of Joey's finger and social embarrassment arising therefrom): meet the 247 other pinheads who thought this represented some sorta pinnacle in senses of yumma.

The rest of you, greet the winners:

Phil Langham, London, EC1 — **"Hey! It *does* give you hairy palms."**

J. A. Allen, Sheffield 8 — **"The band'll be on in *five* minutes."**

Andy Grant, London W5 — **"An' dis little piggy went 'bluurgh' all over da Beach Boys."**

Gary Newton, Leeds, Yorkshire — **"Okay Parsons, I've pulled mine out, now it's your turn."**

Wart Widdowson, Stourbridge, West Midlands — **"Alas poor Tommy, I knew him well."**

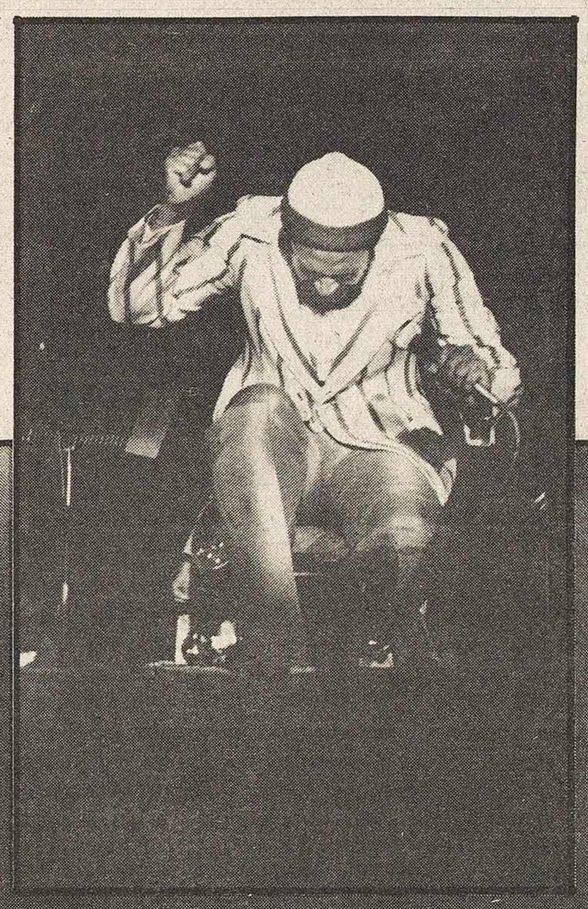
Stephen Hirons, Ilford, Essex — **"Do ya think I'm sexy?"**

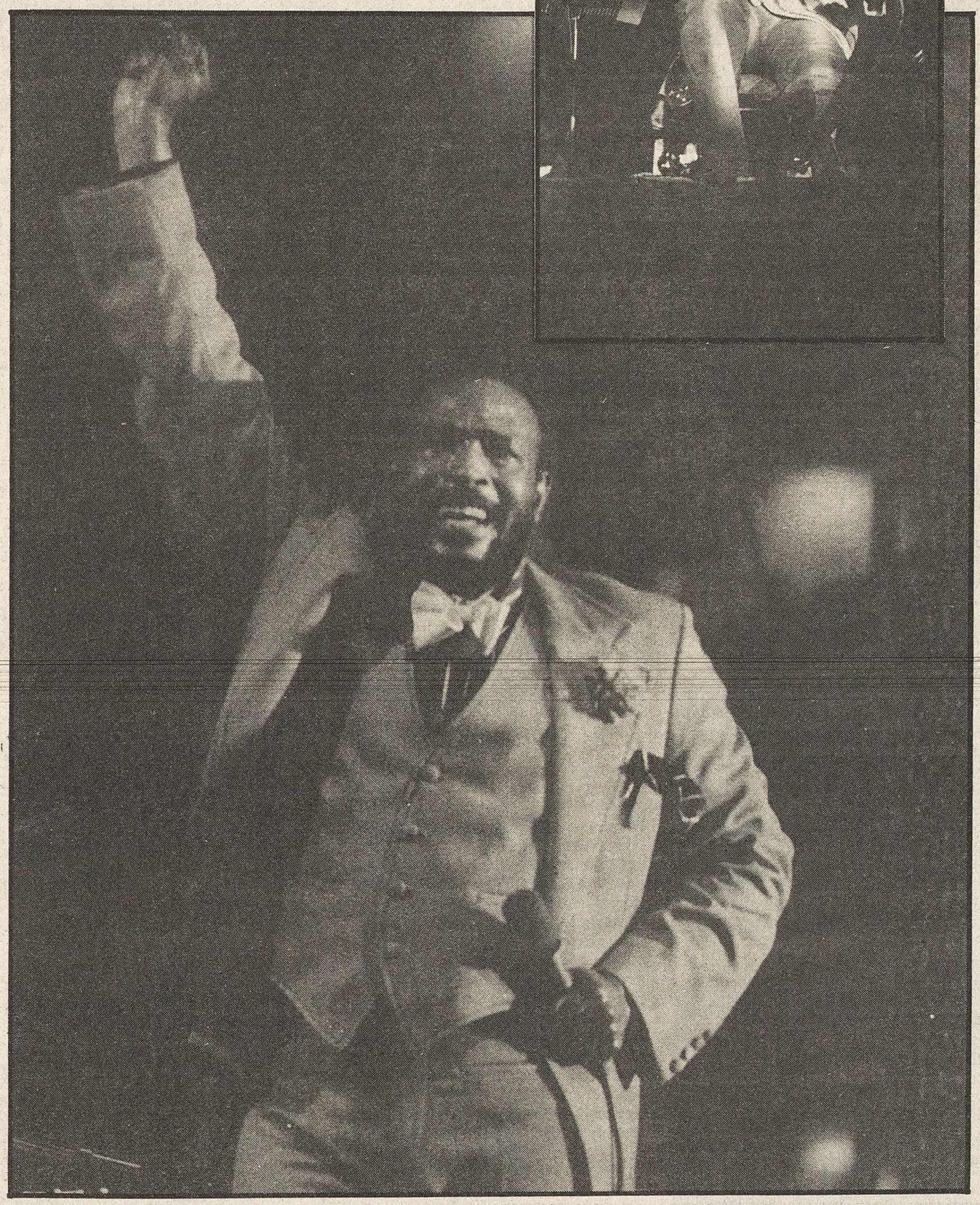
All win copies of Sire Records' promo sampler.

THRILLS

STAND UP FOR YOUR RIGHTS, MY BROTHERS

Till double albums us do part . . . MARVIN GAYE battles the dark forces of feminism, unionism, bankruptcy and posterity.





Fists of fury. MARVIN shows his hand. Pix: DAVID REDFERN and (inset) ALAN JOHNSON.

WHILE TOURING Britain last September, The Temptations were not shy about slagging off their former record company, Motown. Numerous quotes from my interview with the group had to be edited out of the published article in *Black Music*. It was the opinion of an IPC lawyer that costly libel suits lurked in many pockets of the group's conversation.

At one point during the rap, they cited Marvin Gaye as a prime casualty of the corporation politics that soured their own relationship with Motown, claiming, "Marvin is just coasting 'cause he can't get away. He recently swore that they'd have to kill him to get him back into the studio."

"But hasn't he just recorded a new album?" asked one of the party.

"Yeah, but have you heard it?" retorted a Temp. "It's just a reproduction of his early, early work, 'The Soul Moods Of Marvin Gaye', and you know how far back that goes."

Shortly afterwards it became clear that Motown had in fact re-issued Gaye's first album as part of an archive series (in America only, so far), leaving his up-to-date condition shrouded in mystery, law suits and bankruptcy proceedings.

Then suddenly, just before Christmas, a brand new double album hit the streets and British Motown were pleased to announce that Gaye was hovering obligingly on the other end of a transatlantic phone-link to talk about it.

The album "Here, My Dear" is a loser's guide to Love and Marriage and Pain and Divorce; specifically, that of Marv and Anna Gordy — now free, single and disengaged, the one from the other, to the rustle of a million or so dollar bills settling comfortably around the shoulders of Ms Gordy.

On the first few hearings it doesn't seem to me to be a wholly commendable album — over-sentimental in some places, carelessly padded in others — but when it's good it's very good, especially if we're to assume that it's all Straight From The Bleeding Heart, Marvin Gaye Tells It Like It Really Is Sensation.

Trouble is, he's such an enigmatic figure, unsure that he even understands himself, so he says, that it's not too smart to assume anything at all about him. On the phone, as face-to-face, he plays the spiritually righteous innocent who is victimized, confused and oppressed by wordly manoeuvres (Starchild up Babylon Creek without a Mothership) with such placid, seemingly open-hearted candour that he could equally well be one of the world's greatest con men.

Some writers have found this "candour" suspicious, but personally I think he's scrupulously honest about his own reality; it's just that his reality may be considerably different to that of those around him.

Semantics, anyone?

In answer to a catch-all query linking Marvin's current position at Motown with his bankruptcy, divorce and new album I got a response that may explain why women at least find Gaye suspicious.

"I think this is man's last-ditch effort to maintain whatever supremacy we have," Marvin declared, although whether specifically referring to the divorce, the bankruptcy or the album I wasn't too sure. Probably all three, for he continued, "I'm not totally insolvent, I was forced into bankruptcy because there were tremendous pressures put on me by unscrupulous people. Extortionists. But my divorce didn't help any.

"American courts are very imbalanced towards women; totally imbalanced. I think it's becoming the same all over the world. Anna is getting the proceeds from the album. I don't wish her any ill, but something's wrong. If the scales are imbalanced to that extent, something's wrong."

Hence the inner gatefold sleeve design, depicting outstretched arms over a board game called Judgement. The woman's hand is over the money, the house, the car, the dice a spider and a hornet; the man's hand, offering the woman a record across the board, is over a radio, piano, tape recorder and one dollar. In the background, however, the scales are balanced. Perhaps because outside the woman's window the earth is scorched and barren whereas a large crowd of people is seen through the man's window. So Anna gets the money but Marvin retains the talent and fame?

"Well . . . the sleeve is to my design, all except the skull and crossbones ring, but I'd say that that's a pretty bad misconception from the artist's point of view. I wouldn't like to suggest this would hurt her. I'd love to see some happiness in her life.

"Although there is some bitterness in the album there are also respectful cuts and cuts that tell of a wonderful love. It was just lack of compatability . . . in a marriage, compatability in everything.

"If there is equal love and devotion and if one's philosophies are similar, then this is the perfect marriage. The trouble with marriage, one has to put up with little differences and it's the little things you have to look out for — they eventually become monumental things.

"There are great people and there are people who aspire to greatness. If one's mate isn't really of the same mind and feeling, then I can't see it working. And my way of living is such that I wouldn't ask any other person to adapt to my lifestyle."

Oy Oy. Sounds like The Impeccable Warrior has just ridden into the conversation. Are we to assume that Marvin is still reading the works of Carlos Castaneda?

"I haven't changed my philosophy, if that's what you mean. In fact I'm much more in tune with it now. For this reason I feel I must cancel a concert I'm due to do at the Hollywood Palladium. I don't feel right about it spiritually. Also the union want me to put up a $40,000 performance bond for the gig — I think it's just to show they don't like me.

"I'm not very well liked at the union because I don't believe in unions — for myself, that is. I have to make that clear. If you notice, there are no musician credits on the album. That's because I cut all my sessions under the table, so to speak. So I have a terrible name in Los Angeles; I run into flak all the time.

"I have enemies in this country, certain people who are making it difficult . . . even a certain friend, too. His incompetence has made a shambles of the Palladium date and I cannot perform under these conditions. People may say it's me who's difficult but it's my heart, my blood, my throat . . ."

Marvin runs down in mid-sentence, seemingly suddenly aware that he's sounding too defensive for an Impeccable Warrior.

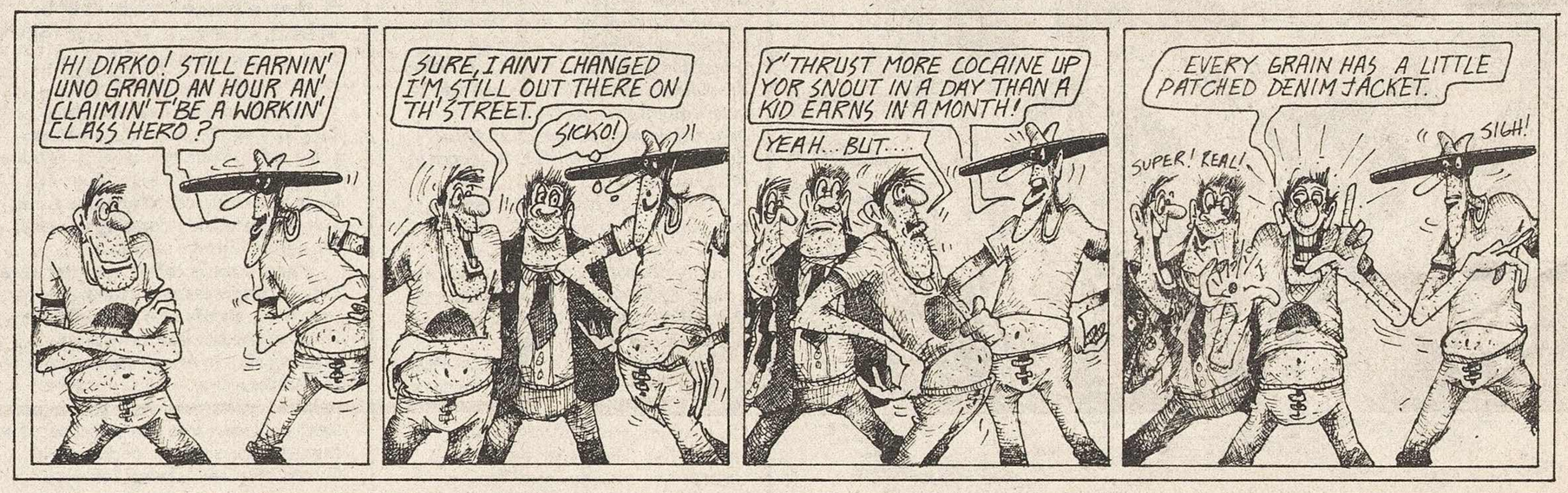
"I hope you can find something nice to say about me out of all of this," he finally says, "but it really doesn't matter. I'm very misunderstood, you know, it's the price I have to pay. Beethoven and Michelangelo were misunderstood in their time, too. I'm not that concerned about now but I'd like to think that, when I leave this earth, I'll be appreciated."

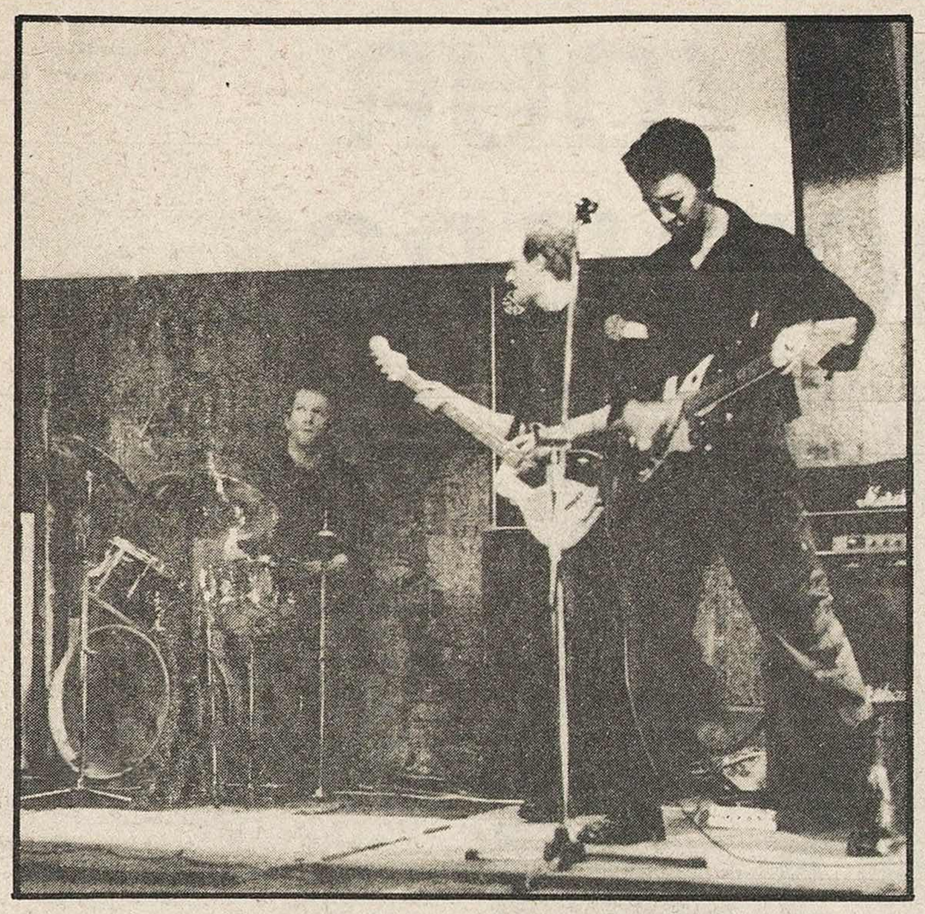
CLIFF WHITE

THRILLS

The Lonesome Groover

BENYON


HI DIRKO! STILL EARNIN' UNO GRAND AN HOUR AN', CLAIMIN' T'BE A WORKIN' CLASS HERO?
SURE, I AINT CHANGED I'M STILL OUT THERE ON TH' STREET.
SICKO!
Y'THRUST MORE COCAINE UP YOR SNOUT IN A DAY THAN A KID EARNS IN A MONTH!
YEAH... BUT....
EVERY GRAIN HAS A LITTLE PATCHED DENIM JACKET.
SIGH!
SUPER! REAL!



CRASS — beneficial music (L-R): Penny Rimbaud, Pete Wright, Andy Palmer.

CRASS perform their latest hit, "God Is A Nazi" c/w "Jesus Was A Transvestite". In action, L-R: Phil Free, Pete Wright, Steve Ignorant. Pix: BERNARD CHANDLER.

The Jesus backlash starts here . . .

CRASS BY NAME CROSS BY NATURE

"I AM NO feeble christ / not me / he hangs in glib delight upon his cross / above my body / christ / forgive / FORGIVE? / shit / i vomit for you jesu / shit forgive / down now from your cross / down now from your papal heights / from that churlish suicide / petulant child / down from those pious heights / royal flag-bearer / goat / billy / i vomit for you / forgive / shit he forgives / he hangs in crucified delight / nailed to the extent of his vision / his cross / his manhood / violence / guilt / sin / he would nail my body upon his cross / suicide visionary / death-reveller / rake / rapist / lifesucker / jesu / earthmover / christus / grave-digger / you dug the graves of auschwitz / the soil of treblinka is your guilt / your sin / master / master of gore . . ."

This is the beginning of "Asylum", a scathing attack on Christianity's fear of sexuality and obsession with death, which was to open the debut record by Crass, a radical seven-piece band from Essex. The record, a 12" 17-track EP entitled "The Feeding Of The Five Thousand", is due to be released by Small Wonder early in February.

I say "was to open" because the record has been censored — not by a court or any legally constituted authority, but by the foreman at an Irish pressing plant. Although the management had accepted the disc as part of Small Wonder's regular custom, one of their foremen objected to the opening track because he found it "blasphemous". He threatened to call a strike if pressing went ahead.

Small Wonder then tried half a dozen of the independent English pressing companies. They all turned it down — *not* because they thought "Asylum" was "blasphemous", but because they thought the record as a whole was "obscene".

"I think what happened," says Pete Stennett of Small Wonder, "was that they saw there was a bit of swearing on it, and a few people got silly and overreacted."

Faced with the probability that no English company would press the record, Crass reluctantly agreed to drop "Asylum" and pressing went ahead in Ireland — where apparently no one thought the record "obscene". The EP now opens with a two-minute silence, entitled "The Sound Of Free Speech". Ironically, two printers have already refused to print the lyric sheet — although one intimated he'd be willing to do it if the band slipped him a little more money . . .

Despite the removal of "Asylum", "The Feeding Of The Five Thousand" remains — to these prejudiced ears — one of the most inspiring records of the last few years. The sound is hardcore punk energy — exhilarating, demanding — like the early Pistols or Clash. The lyrics are direct, abrasive; attacking cherished institutions with a barbed intelligence that makes all the connections. Try this extract from "Berkertex Brides":

"Don't give me your morals/they're filth in my eyes/you can pack them away/with the rest of your lies/your painted mask of ugly perfection/the ring on your finger/the proof of protection/is the rape on page three/is the soldiers obsession/how well you've been caught to support your oppression/one god/one church/one husband/one wife/sordid sequences in brilliant life . . ."

Though their music is at times a howl of pain, anger and defiance, Crass themselves are gentle and friendly people. Anarchists, pacifists; a close, intense community. They live, eight of them plus kids, in an open house near Epping.

"The music," explains bassist Pete Wright, "is just the icing on the cake. We're not just talking about alternatives, we're trying them in the way we live. We try to live without institutions and the conditioning that's been applied to us — without normal structures like family, church, finance."

Living without finance means the group refuse to accumulate capital. They grow their own food, support themselves by doing odd jobs. This hasn't stopped them organising and playing at RAR and CND benefits.

Drummer Penny Rimbaud (a man): "Our chances of playing in any of the usual London venues are pretty slim. You've really gotta lick ass and do deals, and that just isn't how we play it.

"Most of our work is benefit work, which we finance ourselves. If it's a cause we believe in, the money doesn't matter. We'd like to play more gigs — and support more causes — but the idea of playing everyday just to come home with a couple of hundred quid . . . I don't understand that logic. What's the point? It's got to be for a reason. If we need bread, we'll go out and play for money to buy the flour. But not just to build up capital."

Crass have been in existence for two years, have taken themselves seriously as a band for one. But for them, music is a tactic rather than a lifestyle. Their open house policy has been working for twelve years; and members of the band are involved in a variety of projects designed to unsettle society — publishing newspapers, printing posters, spraying graffiti. Of course, it's purely coincidence that the "FIGHT WAR NOT WARS — DESTROY POWER NOT PEOPLE" slogan daubed all over the Central line is a quote from a Crass song.

At gigs, they wear black and deliberately appear militaristic — which has led to accusations of fascism.

Penny: "Our appearance has an obvious appeal for the worst elements around at the moment. But it's a part of the questioning. Playing a section of the audience at their own game and turning it around on themselves. No one at a gig could avoid seeing our relationship to each other and to other people, which is very gentle and respectful. So that sets up a contradiction. Everyone who's gonna have to be a man — and if we're men we were born men and can't do much about it — then how can we break the myth of 'manhood' unless we try breaking it down from its worst extreme?"

It's a dangerous line, and Crass say they're terrified each time they perform. But it's an essential part of what they're about. Whereas most entertainment is confirmatory, reassuring, Crass seek to ask questions, to challenge the preconceptions with which we meander through life. But, I ask, might they not just leave people confused, maybe frightened?

Penny: "That's why we're audience still, not really a 'band', 'cos we're just as frightened by what we're doing to ourselves. But we're *there* — and anyone who needs picking off the floor, we'll pick off the floor. 'Cos that's how we live, that's what this house is all about.

"Yes, it's a very frightening thing. But it's a lot less frightening than the mind-numbing existence that's the alternative to it. What we're saying is: there is a hope, a dignity, a chance. Nihilism is a process, not a full stop; especially not the *ugly* full stop it became with certain elements of punk. It means, throw away the garbage and live your own life."

Penny, you may have noticed, does most of the talking. Which gives a false impression of how the band works. Everyone contributes, is equally responsible. It's simply that Penny enjoys talking, whereas today the others — Pete on bass, Phil Free, Andy Palmer (gtrs), Steve Ignorant, Eve Libertine and Joy (vcls) — are either away or prefer to be quiet. But group support is the backbone of Crass's ideology.

Penny: "You've got to have a group of understanding people around. If I didn't, I wouldn't have the courage to do what I'm doing. Besides, what is there to do it for? The people who recognise what you do are very few and very previous.

"You can't transcend what you've been made into, but you can exist parallel to it. You never lose jealosy, hatred, prejudice — it's always gonna be there — so you just run parallel with it and hope, if you start getting too close to what's fucked up about you, that someone will be kind enough to take your hand and take you back to . . . decency, realness, whatever the word is. So people don't hurt each other.

"These are the central issues we're involved in, really."

Crass, like a lot of people, would like to change the world. But Crass, like very few people, work with caring, vision and integrity. They've also made an excellent record.

It's true, sometimes good guys don't wear white.

GRAHAM LOCK

THRILLS

THE AWESOME POWER OF ROCK'N'ROLL

Drinkers flee from Banshees

IT'S SAID that nothing clears a pub or department store faster than a bomb threat. But in Wirral, Cheshire, it seems they've come up with something even more terrifying than that . . .

At Neston Recreation Centre they've had this ongoing problem, y'see, of boozers reluctant to drink up and go home at the legal time. It's been bothering then for some time. But the fiendishly cunning bar staff have now found a solution.

When Time is called, and the usual chronic lingerers press their elbows ever more firmly into the polished wood of the bar and slow their supping rate to one dram per minute, the barman simply slips out from behind, crosses the floor to the juke box, and plays one last selection. The tune chosen on these occasions is always "Voices", latest fab waxing from Siouxsie and the Banshees. (Well, the B-side of "Hong Kong Garden", anyway).

"It's a dreadful dirge", the bartender told the *Neston News*. "And it clears the place in three seconds flat."

Ah, the power of music!

Asked to comment, Banshees' manager Nils Stevenson waxes philosophical. "I remember when I was young," he told the *Thrills* desk. "We used to react in exactly the same way towards The Plastic Ono Band's 'Don't Worry Kyoko'."

SIMPLE PETER

(Thanks to Chris Smallwood and Dave Roberts of the John Peel Philosophy Foundation, Liverpool).

THRILLS

Donny Hathaway jumps to his death

AS we go to press *Thrills* is saddened to hear of the death of Donny Hathaway, who died after plunging from the 15th floor of a New York hotel — The Essex House — on Saturday, January 13.

The singer/keyboards player had returned to his room after dining with his long-term friend and fellow recording artist Roberta Flack. Police maintain that suicide is the likely verdict, although his manager David Franklin insists that he was in "good spirits."

Hathaway was born in Chicago in 1945 and moved to the black ghetto of St. Louis soon after. The effects can be clearly heard in his monumental soul/gospel workout "The Ghetto Song."

He recorded four albums with Atlantic, of which his debut "Everything Is Everything" and the "Live" album are particularly recommended, and won immediate respect and acclaim from fellow soul artists such as Flack, Stevie Wonder and Marvin Gaye.

Hathaway produced Curtis Mayfield and the Impressions, The Staple Singers, Carla Thomas and Jerry Butler, though it was his partnership with Roberta that gave him his most substantial hit in "You've Got A Friend."

In recent years he seemed unable to recover his initial appeal. He had worked on a film score that was rejected and given up solo work. His contract with Atlantic had also long expired.

BIG STAR (L-R): Chris Bell, Jody Stephens, Andy Hummel, Alex Chilton.

BIG STAR GUITARIST DRIVES OFF CLIFF

CHRIS BELL, a founding member of Big Star, the Memphis band, died after his car crashed outside his home town on December 27. He had been working in his father's fast food restaurant and initial reports of his death suggest that he had been depressed and drinking heavily over the Christmas period.

Although Big Star never reaped their just rewards as a successful, commercial outfit they have been lauded in retrospect for having completed two albums which were certainly accomplished within their own terms. Bell's role as principal joint singer and writer (with Alex Chilton) on the first LP (he doesn't appear on "Radio City") showed him to be a musician of note. However plans to reform the original Big Star failed to reach fruition; Bell and Chilton fell out after the debut, and it seems unlikely that the rift would have been healed.

Bell came to London four years ago with tapes of his "I Am The Cosmos", hoping to find an interested label. The record was mixed at AIR London and eventually released on Car, the New York label. An interesting single, much in the mould of vintage Big Star, "I Am The Cosmos" confirmed that Bell had a continuing solo voice of his own.

It was during this period that I met Bell, who needed both advice and English contacts. Although I never knew him particularly well he seemed to be a courteous, pleasant individual whose contributions to the good reputation of Big Star — as a genuinely creative, innovative and intelligent band — can readily be discerned. The relevant records were re-issued as a double package last year.

MAX BELL

THRILLS

JAN 20th Cricket Club — NORTHAMPTON
21st Electric Ballroom — CAMDEN
24th Pop Club — YORK
25th Norbreck Castle Hotel — BLACKPOOL
26th Mayflower Club — MANCHESTER
27th Eric's — LIVERPOOL
29th Circles Club — SWANSEA
31st Stowaway Club — NEWPORT

FEB 3rd HUDDERSFIELD POLY.
4th Chancellor Hall — CHELMSFORD

AGENCY REPRESENTATION — Mike Evans. D.J.M. — 01-242 2515

'ONE JUMP AHEAD OF THE STORM'
An electric new single from
KIKI DEE
...from the new album "Stay With Me."
Album TRAIN 3 Cassette SHUNT 3 Single XPRES 6
THE ROCKET RECORD COMPANY
marketed by phonogram

THE PASSAGE in the sitting room (L-R): Lol Hinton, Dick Witts (on screen), and Tony Friel. Pic: KEVIN CUMMINS.

CHEZ NOUS AT TEN

Music To Pay Your Mortgage By

I was relaxing at home, practising scales on the mouth organ when the blower squawked on the red phone extension. It was Spencer. "Yeah boss?" He was obviously flustered. "There's been a hitch, Bell. Forget about dawdling away the weekend, psyching your self into a cosy singles overview. The pickets are twenty deep and ugly. You've got three hours 'til deadline or we're up shit-creek. Get down and do your stuff or I and I will know the reason why!" Click whirrr.

I fastened the seat belt, cranked up the Victrola. Here goes, take a deep breath and we'll take it on in from the top.

●SINGLE OF THE WEEK
CHRIS STAMEY AND THE dBs: I Thought You Wanted To Know (Car). 2.43 of unadulterated brilliance courtesy of the North Carolina kid assisted by ex-TV sidekick Richard Lloyd (who wrote this nugget), Will Rigby, Clyde McFettered and the rolling Marble, David Bowler. The sound is vintage pop, and ain't that the name of the game? Twin descending guitars on full reverb duplicate a musky essence normally associated wid de Boids and lesser mortals, but the sense of urgency is the dB's copyright.

Stamey is carving himself a niche in modern singles history with this and the two maxi-EPs, ensuring that the output of Alan Betrock's Car Records remains unsullied by imposters. The flip "If And When" also dumps on the competition from a great height. For more of same check out the Alex Chilton and Peter Holsapple releases on Car. The Big Star himself might be over in Spring; rumour hath it that Stamey and Rigby will back-up . . . I'm already swooning.

● HONOURABLE RUNNER-UP
THE VIPERS: I Got You (Mulligan). Top of the morning to these Southern Irish lads. A new line-up finds Paul Boyle and George Sweeney slamming guitars towards the jugular while a strident piano sequence bubbles underneath lending the proceedings a tastefully manic slug of *je ne sais quoi*. On the reverse, "No Such Thing" proves to be the steadier cut: simple, sawing rhythms and devil take the hindmost venom courtesy of the Boyle larynx. There must be room for another Buzzcocks methinks, and The Vipers are making a nestful of their own design. If you don't like this record you're stupid.

STEVE MIRO: Up And About (Object Music). Steve Miro's (debut?) single on Manchester's Object label is a sheer delight, two sides of wit and wisdom. "Up And About" finds our hero employing a deal of sardonic self-deflation as he learns to cope with the jilting which you Mancunians seem to go in for. Miro sings in an up-market drone and every word's a winner. Fr'instance: *"Out of bed and jumping like a rabbit/I guess that dying is just another habit"* Reet on.

I predict that this boy is going to be huge, etc. He's got the cutting qualities of a Gabriel, a wacky sense of melody riding a fairground path of chintzy Farfisas and booming bass. Besides, anyone who can get some fresh mileage out of the hackneyed aspects of unrequited passion, as Miro does on the flip — "Smiling In Reverse" — must be onto a winner.

● RE-RELEASES OF THE YEAR (SO FAR)
BOBBY WOMACK: I Can Understand It (United Artists 12"). You know everybody works out o'their own bag. Can you understand it? Bobby Womack can. From '72 and still swinging off the hip. Herein you get the extended cool dance floor mix for instant access. Womack moves through more chops than the cold counter at the Swindon Abbatoir. Super soul smokin' slow for night time intimates and closet groovers from vintage years. Swill the taste of those bars of guitar when Womack gets to talk that talk. Whoogh, aargh, put it to the people Bobby. Wooowowww. We can understand that. Funkier than the changing room at Anfield etc.

THE DOORS: Hello I Love You (Elektra). From 1968 (and not 1971 as WEA sleeve designers seem to think), the view is looking good. Though this song has been numbered as The Doors' most exploitative piece of commercialism, I demur. They don't make records like this anymore, Jack and that's that. Pulsating clear light vibrations from Manzarek, Krieger and Densmore move over to let the King deliver his inimitable message with the kickback of the combined California chapters on highway patrol. Beautifully packaged and you get a FREE introduction to "An American Prayer" (again WEA boob, calling it "An American Dream" — expect a visit from the boys Mr. Warner), the amazing live "Roadhouse Blues" and a legit flip in "Love Me Two Times". It's psychedelia, Delia.

● THE GOOD . . .
SEAN WRIGHT: Strange Situation (Ellie Jay). Extremely creditable D.I.Y. independent from Wisbech, Cambs. Wright is an enigma worth popularising. His A-side offering comes replete with straight ahead hard rock vocal punch and well played instrumental expertise (uncredited). Over the edge is his ambition. The reverse "Silent Dreams" is more enterprising, acoustic buildings tumble towards an electric style both inventive and hinting at a bright future. Information required from this unusual and potentially solid purveyor of crunchy biscuits.

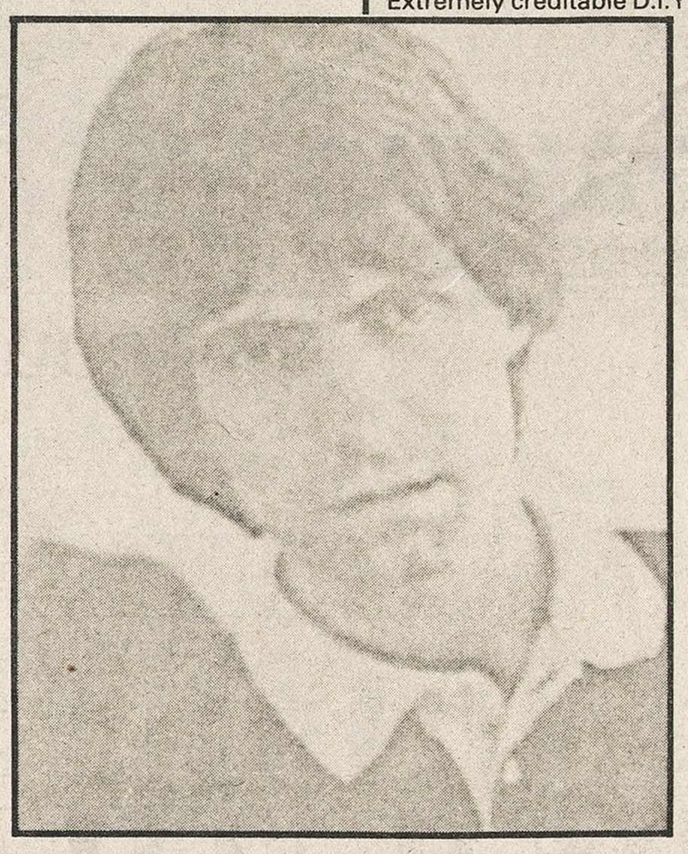
THE RUBINOOS: Fallin' In Love (Beserkley). Kaufman's protegees specialise in a brand of pretty throwaway pop which is pleasant, unassumingly well crafted and presented with love. What's more, Rubinoos output is regular and they don't attempt to over-reach their limits. Not a great song but an acceptable winter warmer just the same.

THE PRETENDERS: Stop Your Sobbing (Real Records). Stunningly produced by Nick Lowe (so what else is new), The Pretenders rifle the Spector dictionary of kustom karat koruses and emerge with an excellent girl band soundalike in the manner of The Ronettes. Which is doubly satisfying 'cos they only boast one female singer — none other than former *NME* writer Chrissie Hynd. A very impressive debut, though the C/W is definitely duff and unintelligible to boot.

No matter — with Hynd adding herself to the growing list of *NME* hacks turned overnite superstars (Nylon, Murray, Kent, Farren), how long before Smith and MacKinnon put their money where their mouth is and come up with that long promised "Lager And Lime" film score, already scheduled for simultaneous Scottish and German release and now severely overdue?

GROVER WASHINGTON: Do Dat (Motown). I gave up on Grover when his interminable list of crossover fusion blandishments refused to agree with my feet. This is already a substantial "Stateside smash" (as we journalists like to call 'em) and

CHRISSIE HYND as seen at Chrissy in NME's Rock Photography '78. Pic: DENNIS MORRIS.



CHRIS STAMEY as seen in January.

it's alright actually. Sure the main lick is nicked from Ronnie Laws, but it's a good 'un and played with spirit. The singalong jive that accompanies is straight out of the Funkadelic bag so that's kool, and Washington has a nose for a noise which for once is good clean fun. Vocals arranged by Rita Boggs, it says here.

THE ROMEOS: Juliet (RCA). Can't resist a group name like that — has to be a one-off, right? Not a bad attempt at doo-wop English style either, if a trifle laboured in pitch and pace. Of course it isn't the fab Marcels singing "Most Of All" but a fair crack at the genuine thing. Flipside is a dull rock ballad which heightens my suspicions that The Romeos are a bunch of studio chaps being naughty while their star subject nips off for a quick manicure and toot.

PASSAGE: New Love Songs (Object Music). Paul Morley sang these boys' praises in last week's issue. Passage are vibrant and self-assured. Dick Witts, Lol Hilton and Tony Friel concoct an absorbing melange of thrusting spike without guitar(s) but I'm not sold on the lyrics, which try to take a swipe at popular burning issues of our time like sexism but really only provide a scant frame work of generalisations in place of something more substantial. Barbed but not barbed enough. There's no accounting for taste though. All the women I played this to just yawned and kicked me in the face.

THE NERVEBREAKERS: Politics (Wild Child). Hot damn! An American EP. The Nervebreakers hail from Dallas, Texas. Major claims to fame were supporting The Ramones and the Pistols when those worthies slipped into the Lone Star State. Four interesting conversation pieces — all disarmingly naive, angry young men, "We'll destroy all politics". . . . The NB's make up in musical prowess what they lack in the reality stakes. ZZ Top excepted, Texans generally come up with summat fair. They aren't the Elevators and they aren't Delbert McLinton, but with the times so out of joint who is?

Completely refurnished by MAX BELL

THE PATHETIX: Aleister Crowley (No Records). Death obsessed snuff rockers from Nelson, Lancs, make a reasonable entry into the rat race with "Aleister Crowley" as starter for ten. Drags a bit at five minutes but these six sprightly young sprogs deserve encouragement rather than brickbats for going it alone. The song centres around a seance wherein The Beast makes an unwelcome appearance and offs the lot of them. Good idea — that will teach them to go dialling 666. Don't meddle with Aleister's whirligig, boys, the elixir is only for initiates. B-side is at 33⅓. Play it on 45 and hey presto you got Siouxsie and the Banshees. Box of Black Magic for effort.

● **THE BAD . . .**
HI-FI: Run Run (Aura). Inputs: Thin Lizzy, Springsteen, Jo Jo Gunne. Outputs: Very little. This doesn't go berserk and it doesn't stand still. Folks say that leader Larry Berridge is nurturing talent but he doesn't gel here. Hi-fi probably make more sense live. Incidentally, they're touring with Sham (poor sods) and maybe Cheap Trick. Nice work if you can get it.

● **AND THE UGLY . . . (Abandon all hope, ye who enter here).**
THE EYES: Once In A Lifetime (Raw).
The Eyes are so cryptic that it never becomes clear just what happens once in a lifetime. Either way it hardly seems to matter. Pedestrian toon, slipshod ideology and on the flip side they tackle "Hello I Love You" (see earlier entry) and get the bloody words wrong. In this case The Eyes don't have it.

WALTER EGAN: Hot Summer Nights (Polydor). Walter Ego has Lindsey Buckingham banging the knobs and a reasonable line in sickly melodic vamping, but after a couple of spins I consigned this wet one down the dumper.

F-WORD: Shutdown (F-Word). American red vinyl so hurry while stocks last. Wisely they made this a limited edition, but probably not limited enough. Doomy grunging of tedious themes delivered with cliched sub-Stooges fervour before heading off to the slumbering zones of Spizz Oil. Looks like the punk correspondence course in punk (foreword by Johnny Moped) arrived two years too late. The Aspen White Boy classic "I Could Puke" is the sole example of an American genre capable of swapping hints with the English stereotypes of yesteryear. Sums up my reaction to this nonsense also.

THE SCRUFFS: Shakin' (Power Play). A Memphis outfit who let down the side somewhat with a very shaky romp across tried and tested pasture. Not one of their better moments, but the vainglorious shenanigans of "Wanna Meet The SCruffs?" might keep their lamps trimmed and burning awhile. I believe they used to call this "power pop". Strange term.

FIREFALL: Strange Way (Atlantic). The archetypally dreadful West Coast supergroup which gives California rock an undeservedly black reputation. Firefall come up with yet another maudlin, sloppy Rick Roberts ballad.

LARRY GATLIN: Night time Magic (Monument). Gatlin is a cardboard cut-out Southern grits crooner who failed to put his Roy Orbison / Gene Pitney manner to any useful end. This disposable waffle comes from an equally dumb C&W album, "Oh Brother", itself only remarkable for the presence of the celestial Wayne Moss on one cut. Lumpen Larry would put us all out of his misery if he were to fall under the nearest convenient truck.

JIMMY CLIFF: Stand Up And Fight Back (Warners). Regrettable spliff an' a babble on from the lovely Jimmy Cliff who hasn't made a decent record for three years. Every reggae cliche in the session man's book can't disguise the tedium of his latest "Give Thankx" album; rank skank. It's a crying shame too because the man has a voice as beatiful as an Al Green or a Marley.

THE POINTER SISTERS: Everybody Is A Star (Planet). More cobwebbed non-sequiturs from the supposedly rejuvenated Pointer Sisters with Richard Perry production and a Sylvester Stewart number that's already been seen and found wanting as far as I'm concerned. I like Anita, Ruth and June but this meander across the cosmic wastes of Sly's mentally defective frontal lobe is not the Fat City of the Pointer's Blue Thumb pedigree. Sorry.

ROSE ROYCE: I'm In Love (And I Love The Feeling) (Whitfield Records). Sub-standard dreck from the Whitfield stable. Soul muzak by numbers which in no way enhances the reputation Rose Royce have around these parts for coming up with the goods.

STELLA PARTON: Stormy Weather (Elektra). A Leo Sayer composition which proves that there's no fool like an old fool, every cloud has a silver lining, it never rains but it pours and records about the weather are more boring than talking about it. Nice tits though. Can we say that in print?

NIGEL SIMPKINS: X-ENC (Waldo's Records). Can this be the very same Simpkins who used to run a record shop in Derby, moved to Virgin and is now the local boy made good in Kentish Town? Whatever, whoever, the Lincolnshire poacher wades into the heady mire of parodyville with a well aimed swipe at electronix pseudery. Made me chuckle. Recorded on one track with an electric kettle, comb, paper and trannie set fair to Radio Free Rumania. *Snouds* single of the week.

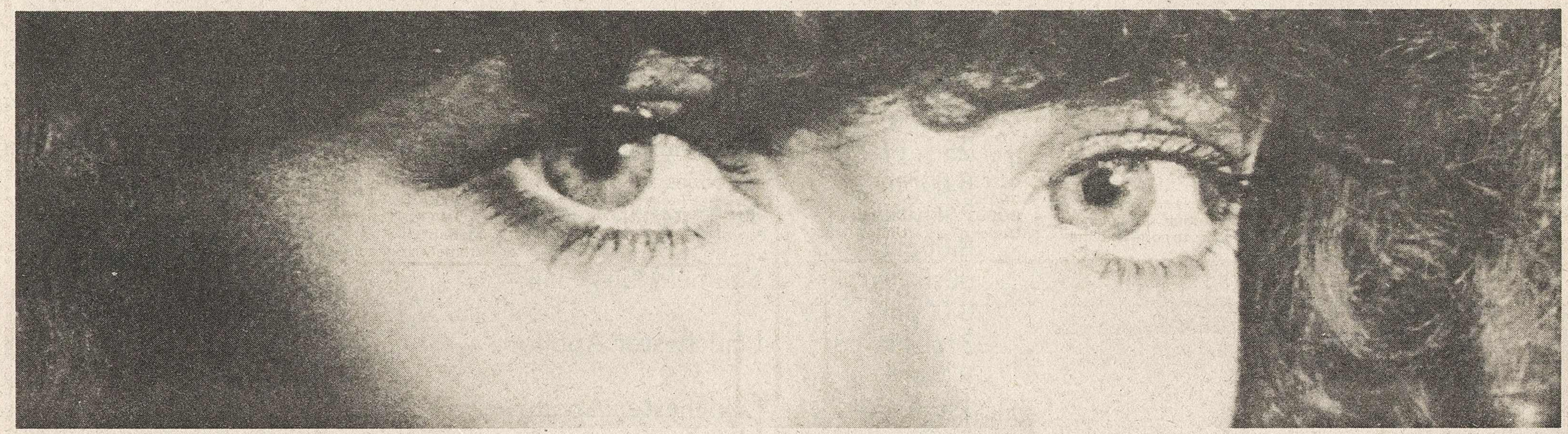
EDDIE MONEY: Maybe I'm A Fool (CBS). Absolutely no doubt about it, old chap. Money is a vastly overrated talent who failed to carry the hype afforded him as an ex-member of New York's finest. Bruce Botnick produces immaculately as usual but Money was better off on another beat. Baad (and I don't mean baaaad) white blue-eyed soul.

THE SECRET: Night After Night (Oval). Charlie Gillet's high hopes rest on the Modern/Leopard Secret axis. Sounds better than it did when I heard the demos and might slip through as a surrogate glam weepie. Too sterilised for my tastes. Safe as milk.

LOCKJAW: Journalist Jive (Raw). I regret being so down on both these Raw Records (remember The Users . . . hi boys!) but this manifestly fails to make the nut. The song tries to point the finger of scorn at attitude dancing hacks, but packs neither the incision nor the brevity necessary to tackle the subject properly. Like Strummer's "Cheap Skates", the misdirected missile is pitifully indicative of a lack of having anything to replace it with. Who wants to hear songs about journalists anyway? Jeffrey Dahl's "Rock and Roll Critic" is the only successful table-turning sneer that I can remember. The cover is a tawdry pastiche of the Public Image single sleeve, as if that wasn't crass enough.

METAL MICKEY: Lollipop (EMI). Footling novelty synthesiser garbage.
Nevertheless a huge hit, England being a nation of shop-lifters.
JOHN PAUL YOUNG: Standing In The Rain (Ariola). When you should have been dancing. Awful Vanda Young composition given the treatment it so richly deserves. A Glaswegian based in Australia who's big in South Africa. So's Demis Roussos. Guaranteed to induce instant nausea leading to protracted vomiting. A Radio One hot spin, of course.

STAY WITH ME



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The Technology

How to live with creativity, success, and the shape of things to come.

The PETER GABRIEL Interview By STEVE CLARKE

IF PETER Gabriel is at all worn-out after the 18-week tour that culminated at Hammersmith Odeon the week before Christmas, he's not letting on. Already he has a tentative work schedule for 1979 that would daunt most of us.

In the next few months there's a distinct possibility that Gabriel will produce Virgin pop band The Young Ones and Interview, the Bath-based group who supported Gabriel on tour. He also plans to finish work on his next single "I Don't Remember" — a worthy successor to "D.I.Y." — and write an article with the author of *Science, Technology and The Arts,* Dr Stewart Kranz, on the future of entertainment. The piece will appear in the science journal *Omni,* and there's the possibility that a book will come out of the liaison too.

Gabriel is also checking out the feasibility of a touring train that would make Stiff's Whistle Stop Tour look like a 15p ride on the London Underground. And there are plans for him to put out a video disc in the not too distant future — not to mention the possibility of a movie of Gabriel's Genesis postscript, "The Lamb lies Down On Broadway" album.

Furthermore, Gabriel has almost half of his next album in embryo form. Like its two predecessors, the record will be entitled quite simply "Peter Gabriel".

He explains: "Originally the idea was that each album would look like a different issue of a magazine, like *Time,* which has the name in the same place and you recognise it not by the headline but by the picture on the front."

However, after the third album Gabriel will change both the title of his albums and the style of the music. This is all part of a master-plan he hatched when he set out to establish a new identity for himself on emerging from the two years he spent in isolation from the music business after quitting Genesis. By then he hopes to be free of his American label Atlantic Records and with a company less bent on pandering to the tastes of American FM radio.

Atlantic has already turned down a version of the single "I Don't Remember" because in their opinion Robert Fripps's guitar solo was "an annoyance factor". Their response to Gabriel's last album was pretty lukewarm too: Atlantic didn't think it was commercial. Although it didn't join the ranks of the platinum sellers, it did do better than Gabriel's first offering, which is more than you can say of its British sales.

Any similarities with the Bowie way of creating an image and destroying it are, says Gabriel, strictly spurious, and his thinking in terms of a trilogy of albums *a la* Bowie's soon-to-be-completed "Low" trilogy is pure coincidence. Anyhow, one feels that Gabriel's desire for constrant change is based on a rigorous self-improvement policy and not a wish just to present the public with different personae one after another.

Gabriel's 'punk' hero Rael — "The Lamb's" central character — was never so clearly defined and overtly manipulative a gesture as Bowie's Ziggy. Neither did it take over its creator's personality. Unlike Bowie, Gabriel's lifestyle doesn't alter with each shift in image, and anyway since leaving Genesis Gabriel's onstage persona has remained constant, save for the odd shearing of the barnet.

As Gabriel says himself: "I think Bowie does things with a lot more style and fashion consciouness than I do. I get the feeling that he's much more calculating.

"There's not too much coincidence which emanated from things labelled Bowie. With me there is still quite a large functioning of randomness, accident, mistakes and suchlike.

"Outside of 'Exposure' (a "Lowesque" track on the second Gabriel album, co-written by brain of English rock Robert Fripp and dominated by Frippertronics), I can't really see we've got much in common musically.

"I like Bowie a lot. Any artiste who's prepared to sacrifice what he is for what he might be . . ."

Which is what you've done.

"That's what I intend to do, and I think that's a prerequisite for doing anything else. You must let go of what you've got 'cause if you try and clutch on to something which you think is yours it withers and dies.

"I don't see myself hiding behind anything. I think now I'm trying to expose more of myself."

WHAT IS common to Gabriel and Bowie is that they both transcend old and new wave camps. For Gabriel this is a considerable achievement. After all, he was once the figurehead of a group considered by many, however wrongly, to be a bunch of old farts.

Gabriel has still to make the big league as far as selling records goes, but he has succeeded in laying the ghost of Genesis to rest with incredible ease. Peter Gabriel has established an identity for himself well ahead of his three-album schedule. And he's done so with songs and performances that show considerably more insight into the, erhh, modern world and overall wit than most of the original new wave bands will ever do.

Unlike so many new wave ninnies, Gabriel is a credible figure who acts like an aware adult — and there's not many pop stars you can say that about. To Gabriel there is more to life than imitating your favourite rock star, copping a package of trendy polemics and hoisting yourself upon a gullible public courtesy of the music business's tried and trusted hype machine — that's if you don't fall out with your manager in the process.

"I'm anonymous wave," he says lighthheartedly, and then more seriously: "I think of myself as a new artiste now anyway. Just in the way of how I would like to approach things."

Like any major talent, Gabriel will always transcend trends, taking from them what he feels are their positive aspects in the way The Beatles did in the '60s.

Gabriel reckons that since cutting the cord from Genesis he's captured a new audience: "I think the first time round there were quite a lot of curious Genesis fans, many of who went away disgusted with what they saw."

He's frankly amazed at how much credibility he now commands.

The first time we met for this feature was the day after *NME*'s Christmas issue came out. Gabriel was astonished to see his album had been voted sixth best album of the year in our annual round-up. (I can only bemoan about it not being voted *the* album.)

He'd just completed a rehearsal with Tom Robinson for Christmas Eve's festive bash and was due to go on and do his own show in two hours' time. Despite the exacting schedule, Gabriel was politeness itself, but the shortage of time and a constant stream of backstage to and fro — or maybe he was just knackered — did seem to have the effect of slowing down Peter's thought process. After an hour or so we decided to call it a day and meet again after Christmas.

Incidentally the link-up with Robinson (of all people) was Harvey Goldsmith's wheeze. But wasn't this, despite Gabriel's new wave credibility, an odd combination?

"We're both 28 and we both grew up listening to the same music," offers Gabriel, a shade lamely. "The Kinks, The Yardbirds, Manfred Mann, the Stones, The Beatles . . ." A Gabriel-Robinson composition may well end up on Tom's next album . . .

Phil Collins' presence on Christmas Eve had given rise to speculation of the two working together again on a full-time basis. Grinning broadly, Gabriel denies all knowledge. He doesn't, though, write off the possibility of the two working together again at some juncture?

"Ah . . . well, I don't write-off anything. He's an amazing drummer. I'd forgotten quite how good he is. It was interesting to see what he came up with for my songs. I think he had a good time just drumming and not having to sing at all."

AS HAS BEEN observed many a time, Peter Gabriel is a most unlikely rock star. When he blusters into his publicist's Soho office for our second meeting, apologising profusely for his late arrival, he resembles an awkward but friendly sixth former. But beneath this facade of boyishness lurks a much wiser physiognomy and one at odds with his 28 years — proof perhaps of the knowledge crammed inside. When it comes to rapping about technology, Gabriel could talk the hind-leg off Raymond Baxter, so to speak.

Ten years in the music business, at least half of it as a main attraction, appear to have left not a trace on Peter Gabriel. Though nowhere near as nervous as he used to be, there are still times when it might cool things out if I dropped a sneaky quaalude into Peter's hot drink. He visibly quakes when Pennie Smith fires off her first snap.

Like his manner, his clothes give no clue to his profession. Despite his keen awareness of the visual, he has about as much fashion sense as Clyde in the new Clint Eastwood movie. Presumably this is one of the reasons why he isn't yet the household name he deserves to be.

He's very involved with the life of his village near Bath, the name of which he wisely prefers to keep

# of Being Gabriel

secret. Indeed, during the recent Big Freeze Gabriel assumed the role of greengrocer and general help, as his Land Rover could circumnavigate even the most treacherous weather.

Gabriel and his wife Jill are also involved with the local drama group. One of the songs on his last album, the exquisitely chilling "Mother Of Violence", started life as a song for the village kids, Peter and Jill working together on the melody. The lyrics are Peter's — *"Fear — she's the mother of violence/making me tense to watch the way she breeds"* — and stem from a day when Gabriel's sensibilities were on hold.

"I was sitting in front of the television, stuffing myself with junk food, trapped in this negative state of mind. I think of myself as an optimist with pessimistic tendencies and that was one of the days when the tendencies were coming out.

"It's only in interviews and suchlike that I begin to realise what I'm writing about. I don't think in terms of general themes. Each song is a separate item."

How did "D.I.Y." — surely as much a theme song for the age as anything coming from the pen of a Lydon, Weller or Strummer — come about?

"Well, there was a variety of things," says Gabriel in his uncertain whisper. "I think when people don't control what they do they get no satisfaction from it. That was the simple part of it.

"Also I wanted to have some energy of some of the new music coming through. I wanted to in some way make references to that, but without apeing the style in any way, which is partly why I choose the acoustic arrangement.

"I felt too that there was the danger that some of the success . . . So many bands were getting big very quickly. It was creating a mould which was being reproduced and was therefore uncreative.

"There was that feel that as soon as The Sex Pistols became big each record company wants to find its own Sex Pistols and market it in a similar fashion. So a uniform gets established.

"I think one of the healthiest things about a lot of the new stuff was that it wasn't easy to stereotype. There was the opportunity for a lot of original thinking. That's something I always like to see, and I think that was reduced by the speed at which things happened. The fact that, say, ten years ago there would be people who'd do apprenticeships in the clubs for a year or a couple of years or more maybe. They'd learn how to deal with audiences. To really state what they wanted to do very tightly and get an identity for themselves that was different from other people.

"That's been lost to some extent by the fact that the Press were putting bands on the front page almost the day after they were formed. I think that helped to destroy some of the momentum that might have been sustained had it been allowed to grow through people first and Press second. I don't object to that in principle as it gives people a chance to get to an audience that they might not have otherwise. But sometimes people aren't ready to handle it.

"I don't think the Pistols were ready to handle what happened to them. I think they would have lasted longer had it not happened so fast. There's some things a band gets over a period of time which is unique. It takes a couple of albums or so to run in."

You said that "Mother Of Violence" was produced on of those days when your pessimistic tendencies were coming out. "Indigo" strikes me like that too.

"It's down and it's up. It was supposed to be just a straight domestic situation of a father dying in a house. I had the mood of 'Old Man River' in my head at the time. And although that is a protest song there's a warmth in that song which is very helpful, I think. The father was coming to terms with his imminent departure."

YOU ORIGINALLY stated that your post-Genesis songs would be more personal, but it seems to me that you're still creating characters in your songs and not that much of you comes through in them.

"It doesn't seem like that to me. Yes, I suppose in that sense: there is an old man and it is in the third person. But it is a situation I see myself in.

"Some Indians rehearse their death and consequently have an awareness of death. It's a very positive situation. There are things like The Dance of Death where they familiarise themselves with the steps. When I've thought about dying I've been frightened of the prospect. I try and come to terms with it."

Another song on "Peter Gabriel" that deals with death, though a different kind of death, is "Home Sweet Home", where a financially pressed mother throws herself and her child out of the window of the high rise flat she lives in. The song was triggered off by Gabriel reading a newspaper story of the event.

"I thing what frightens you is that you can't understand what it is which drives people to do it. I really didn't want Gary Gilmore to be executed. That got to me. The Jonestown suicide also got to me in a similar way. I'm not quite sure what it is, but I suppose I must in some way feel threatened by the fact that people are prepared to take their lives.

"But within that there was perhaps a more cynical approach with life insurance (in the song the surviving husband cleans up thanks to an insurance claim) and the country and western steel guitar."

You've said in the past that the album was "just a pop album".

"Pop should, I suppose, by definition be popular. And (laughs) I'm not sure whether it was that popular. But just in the approach, that it was basically songs arranged rather than any grand pieces.

"It should qualify as entertainment first in that it shouldn't require any hard work, effort, serious study to enjoy."

But surely you hope it will do more than entertain?

"Yeah, but that's not the prime reason. I think why I like Tom's music is the fact that I can enjoy it as entertainment as well as with or without the message.

"I think there's a danger if you're selling music on the strength of its credibility as a political message. I would agree that the attitude is

very important. A really unhealthy attitude or an attitude devoid of any awareness of what people are or what is happening to people makes it pretty numb music."

Will you be using Robert Fripp as a producer again?

"Not as a producer — but I've a great deal of respect for him. He found me a little frustrating to work with. Sometimes he wanted to get things done very fast, which I was in agreement with, but there's a certain amount of experimentation which I like to do which he wasn't as inclined to . . . We still see each other, but I want to try and do some stuff myself next time. It's logical too. E (for Ezrin, as in Bob) for the first album, F for the second and G for the third. I may use someone for three or four tracks which will be singles.

"His credit on the album was 'Robert Fripp for Peter Gabriel' because some of the style of the sound was not altogether what he wanted. He didn't want people to think that was exactly how he would have interpreted the music — for example 'Here Comes The Flood' on the first album (Fripp plays guitar on the record) . . . although I think the version that will appear on his album will appeal more to my present tastes than my version.

"I think Robert had seen my situation with Bob Ezrin on the first album and was consciously trying to do the very opposite. His role was more in terms of suggesting ways of doing things. I think the dryness of it was something he was very keen on, as I was. He didn't want to involve himself in the writing and arrangement type decisions that Bob Ezrin wanted to involve himself in."

So the arrangements were yours?

"And the band's. I really wish to stress that. Some of the parts were written with the songs, like the riff in 'D.I.Y.', but a lot of the lines are suggested by the musicians themselves.

"The playing on the album is very hard edged. I think there's actually more synthesizer on the second album, but it's used in a different way. It's used less like a string section. On the next one I want to try a couple of things built up entirely from synthesizers. Again that comes down to the use of technology. Often people will just stick on the new inventions like icing on the cake, whereas the instrument has the possibility of allowing you to totally rethink your music from a very fundametal compositional stage.

"Similarly in a lot of ways I think technology is *the* revolution that in the sense that it will change people's lives more than any other single thing in the next 50 years — much more than Marx or Hitler."

(Incidentally, "Exposure" is the title cut out of Fripp's soon-to-be-released album, and as Gabriel said the record also features Fripp's version of Gabriel's "Here Comes The Flood"; Gabriel very nearly called his second album "Exposure".)

WHILE ACKNOWLEDGING that technology is more likely to be used in the future to "destroy and enslave people" simply because it's organisations like NASA who have the resources to develop it, Gabriel is enthralled by its positive applications — hence his collaboration with Dr Stewart Kranz.

He was (I think) the first rock star to fully realise the potential offered by the invention of the radio mike, a portable leadless mike that frees a performer from the confines of the stage. Always eager to offer his services as a guinea pig, Gabriel seized the opportunity when a New York inventor presented it to him.

"Technology is the mother of invention," he grins — although on one occasion in Germany the radio mike led to an embarrassing situation. The mike allows him to run amock through his audience. To do this Gabriel has on occasion had to leave the theatre by the stage door and in order to appear at the back of the auditorium, re-enter the theatre by its front doors. At one gig in Germany the security guards had locked the front doors and it wasn't until several precious minutes had ticked by that Gabriel managed to get back into the theatre — by which time he was totally out of sync with his band.

"He'd also like to introduce video into his stage set. One idea is to have a large screen onstage which immediately prior to the band's going on would show film of the activities backstage. "I think this would be interesting because you could watch the transition between offstage characters and . . . It's probably remarkably boring."

His obsession with technology (his father is an electrical engineer and designer) extends beyond what can be utilised on stage.

"I believe in cellular systems rather than a hierarchy where power is centered at the top and then spreads out. I don't think democracy exists on that sort of scale, for instance. Small units of people who control their own destinies that are interlinked is the only way that you can pretend to call anthing democratic.

"In any field I feel that that's a more productive way to set things up. And with technology there is the possibility of decentralising. With computer chips, factories can be made much more versatile, so instead of scale demanding that you have to have this monstrous thing which makes X amount of one item, you have smaller units which can make ten or a hundred or a thousand different items according to the way they've been programmed. So I think that people will be less dwarfed.

"Advanced technology doesn't have to mean there is less communication between people. There could be more. For instance, at the moment you have this idea that TV has three channels. If you went into a library and got offered three books you'd walk out quickly.

"You also need two-way communication. I think TV could be used constructively, as well as just as a passive drug. It could be used constructively as an information source. I think that people will change jobs quite often in the course of their lives in the future. Therefore they'll need retraining as well as more leisure time. People will need to get information quickly.

"There are some progressive unions who are fighting for retraining so that if someone does lose a job the company that lays the employee off is responsible for finding alternative employment. I think that's more important than trying to defend jobs which have been obsolete for the last ten or 15 years.

"To try and stop the motor car or the aeroplane is already too late — and much of this other stuff has already infiltrated to the point where it can't be cut out."

GABRIEL IS capable of thinking in a more mundane level when it comes to solving a creative crisis. At the very beginning of the tour in Oxford last summer he suddenly realised that he and his band lacked something on the visual front.

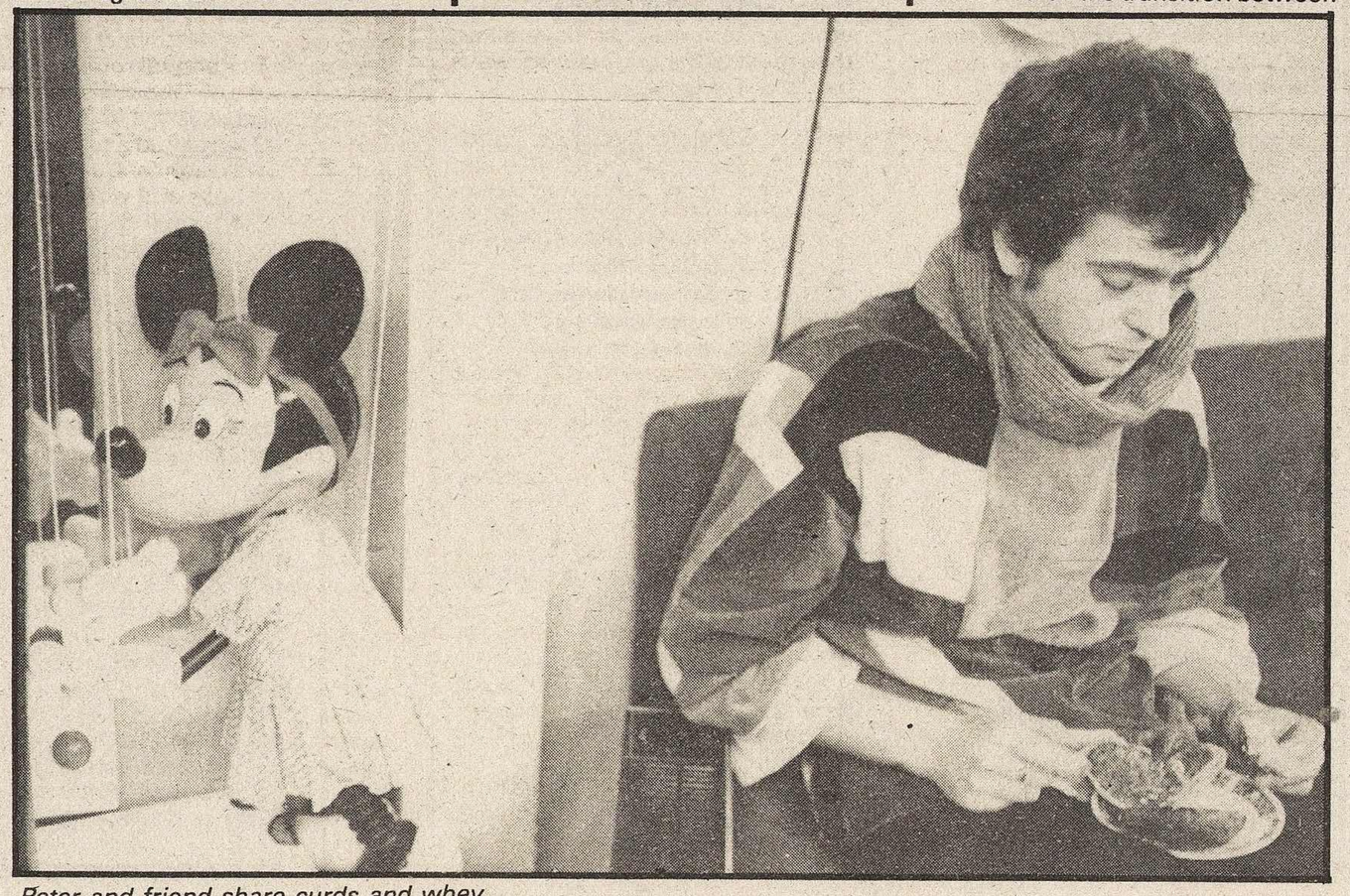
"We're an odd looking bunch. I quite like it when you have a unifying facet, so I wanted there to be something which was consistent to the whole thing." The Halfords bicycle shop around the corner from Oxford's New Theatre had just what Gabriel needed. And when the ensemble hit the stage that night each musician was wearing a fluorescent red safety jacket.

They've remained ever since, perfectly in context with the rest of Gabriel's props — which include scaffolding and a battery of shop floor lamps. Very industrial. Very Devo, as Angus MacKinnon was quick to point out in his rather churlish review of Hammersmith.

Gabriel: "There are various areas which Bowie and Devo have been into which I've consciously tried not to tred in because I don't want to . . . For instance, Bowie's all-white lighting was something I talked about with Ian Knight (Gabriel's lighting specialist) before he did it. And that ruled out that possibility. I think Devo now use radio mikes. Really it's a free-for-all anyway — and no idea is ultimately that original. I'd like to do things a little differently to other people so I'm consciously checking out other people so I don't do the same.

"To my mind I was trying to do things sparsely and simply. I thought the scaffolding would give a nice atmosphere. Essentially what

■ Continued page 44



Peter and friend share curds and whey

1978 NME READERS' POLL

● For results analysis, see page 26

BEST MALE SINGER

1 David Bowie
2 John Lydon
3 Elvis Costello
4 Bob Geldof
5 Jon Anderson
6 Joe Strummer
7 Ian Dury
8 Robert Plant
9 Paul Weller
10 Pete Shelley
11 Bruce Springsteen
12 Peter Gabriel
13 Bob Dylan
14 Mick Jagger
15 Roger Daltrey

BEST FEMALE SINGER

1 Debbie Harry
2 Siouxsie Sioux
3 Kate Bush
4 Poly Styrene
5 Pauline (Penetration)
6 Joan Armatrading
7 Fay Fife
8 Patti Smith
9 Rachel Sweet
10 Elkie Brooks
11 Joni Mitchell
12 Stevie Nicks
13 Linda Ronstadt
14 Lene Lovich
15 Julie Covington

ALBUM

1 All Mod Cons — the Jam
2 Give 'Em Enough Rope — The Clash
3 Live & Dangerous — Thin Lizzy
4 The Scream — Siouxsie & The Banshees
5 This Year's Model — Elvis Costello
6 Some Girls — The Rolling Stones
7 Another Music In A Different Kitchen — Buzzcocks
8 A Tonic For The Troops — The Boomtown Rats
9 Black & White — The Stranglers
10 Darkness On The Edge of Town — Bruce Springsteen

SINGLE

1 White Man In Hammersmith Palais — The Clash
2 Public Image — Public Image Ltd
3 Rat Trap — The Boomtown Rats
4 Down In The Tube Station At Midnight — The Jam
5 Hong Kong Garden — Siouxsie & The Banshees
6 Shot By Both Sides — Magazine
7 Miss You — Rolling Stones
8 Because The Night — Patti Smith Group
9 Jilted John — Jilted John
10 Baker Street — Gerry Rafferty

SONGWRITER

1 Elvis Costello
2 Paul Weller
3 David Bowie
4 Strummer/Jones
5 Pete Shelley
6 Bob Dylan
7 Bob Geldof
8 Bruce Springsteen
9 Ian Dury
10 Anderson / Squire / Howe

BEST DRESSED SLEEVE

1 Some Girls — The Rolling Stones
2 Live & Dangerous — Thin Lizzy
3 Give 'Em Enough Rope — The Clash
4 GO2 — XTC
5 The Scream — Siouxsie & The Banshees
6 War Of The Worlds — Jeff Wayne
7 All Mod Cons — The Jam
8 Can't Stand The Rezillos — The Rezillos
9 Bat Out Of Hell — Meatloaf
10 Moving Targets — Penetration

ELVIS COSTELLO — Best Songwriter

BEST GROUP

1 The Clash
2 The Jam
3 The Boomtown Rats
4 Genesis
5 Buzzcocks
6 The Stranglers
7 Thin Lizzy
8 The Rolling Stones
9 Yes
10 Siouxsie & The Banshees
11 Led Zeppelin
12 Elvis Costello & The Attractions
13 The Who
14 Ian Dury & The Blockheads
15 Queen
16 Tom Robinson Band
17 Graham Parker & The Rumour
18 Blondie
19 Electric Light Orchestra
20 Status Quo

BEST NEW GROUP

1 Public Image Ltd
2 Stiff Little Fingers
3 Siouxsie & The Banshees
4 Dire Straits
5 The Cars
6 The Undertones
7 The Boomtown Rats
8 John Cooper-Clarke
9 Magazine
10 Van Halen
11 Devo
12 Penetration
13 The Rezillos
14 Kate Bush
15 The Skids
16 Buzzcocks
17 Whitesnake
18 Meat Loaf
19 The Only Ones
20 X Ray Spex

GUITARIST

1 Mick Jones
2 Paul Weller
3 Jimmy Page
4 Eric Clapton
5 Keith Richards
6 Ritchie Blackmore
7 Brian May
8 Steve Howe
9 John McKay
10 Wilko Johnson

BASS

1 Jean Jacques Burnel
2 Bruce Foxton
3 Phil Lynott
4 Chris Squire
5 Paul Simonon
6 Sid Vicious
7 John Entwistle
8 Michael Rutherford
9 Bill Wyman
10 John Deacon

KEYBOARDS

1 Dave Greenfield
2 Rick Wakeman
3 Johnny Fingers
4 Tony Banks
5 Brian Eno
6 Steve Naive
7 Keith Emerson
8 Barry Andrews
9 Dave Formula
10 Jon Lord

DRUMS

1 Keith Moon
2 John Maher
3 Topper Headon
4 Phil Collins
5 Rick Buckler
6 Charlie Watts
7 Kenny Morris
8 Cozy Powell
9 Jet Black
10 Brian Downey

DJ

1 John Peel
2 Anne Nightingale
3 Kenny Everett
4 Nicky Horne
5 Noel Edmonds
6 Alan Freeman
7 Kid Jensen
8 Dave Lee Travis
9 Roger Scott
10 Simon Bates

RADIO SHOW

1 John Peel Show
2 Your Mother Wouldn't Like It (DJ Nicky Horne)
3 Anne Nightingale Request Show
4 Alan Freeman Show
5 Roundtable (DJ Kid Jensen)
6 Kenny Everett Show
7 Rock On
8 Radio Caroline Personal Top 30
9 The Archers
10 Noel Edmonds Show

TV SHOW

1 Revolver
2 Old Grey Whistle Test
3 The Fall And Rise Of Reginald Perrin
4 Monty Python's Flying Circus
5 The Kenny Everett Video Show
6 M.A.S.H.
7 The Muppet Show
8 Rock Goes To College
9 The Sweeney
10 Dr Who

MOST WONDERFUL HUMAN BEING

1 Sid Vicious
2 John Lydon
3 Bob Geldof
4 Debbie Harry
5 David Bowie
6 John Peel
7 Ian Dury
8 Jeremy Thorpe
9 Jimmy Pursey
10 Joe Strummer

PIN-UP OF THE YEAR

1 Debbie Harry
2 Kate Bush
3 Siouxsie Sioux
4 Rachel Sweet
5 Olivia Newton-John
6 Bob Geldof
7 Sid Vicious
8 Pauline Murray
9 Fay Fife
10 Poly Styrene

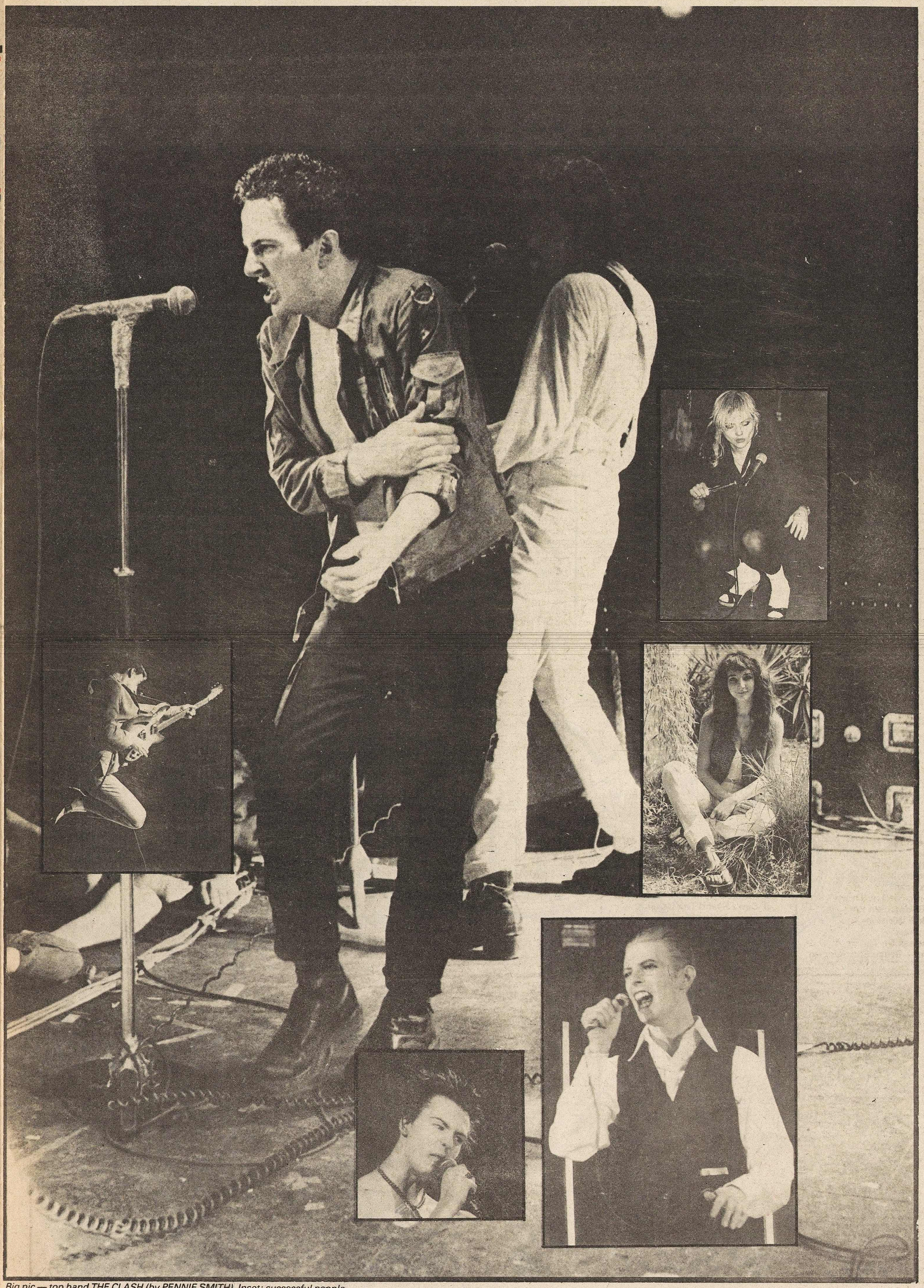
FILM

1 Close Encounters Of The Third Kind
2 Midnight Express
3 Annie Hall
4 Star Wars
5 Grease
6 Saturday Night Fever
7 The Last Waltz
8 Jubilee
9 Revenge Of The Pink Panther
10 Renaldo & Clara

CREEP OF THE YEAR

1 John Travolta
2 Tony Blackburn
3 Julie Burchill
4 Jimmy Pursey
5 Peter Powell
6 Malcolm McLaren
7 Rod Stewart
8 Father Abraham & The Smurfs
9 Bob Geldof
10 Freddy Mercury

PUBLIC IMAGE LTD — Best New Group



Big pic — top band THE CLASH (by PENNIE SMITH). Inset: successful people.

1978 NME READERS' POLL

Analysis by CHARLES SHAAR MURRAY

● See full results on page 24

MEET THE NEW BOSSES . . . In which the new hierarchies are consolidated, more and more of the older gods are consigned to the quiet darkness and everybody who sneered at the new bands back in '76 can kindly go laugh on the other side of their faces, okay?

Compared to the blizzard of short-sightedness that afflicts readers' polls in other publications of a vaguely rock-oriented nature, the NME readers' poll vindicates not only our belief in new rock and roll but — let's get sickening for a second — our belief in you, our readers, as the hippest bunch of punters reading any rock paper anywhere. Your votes let us know that we're not pissing in the wind as much as our most pessimistic moments tell us we are. Thanks for backing our judgements — and we hope we continue to back yours. To business, then . . .

WHO MATTERS: the toughest of the new and the most tenacious of the old, which is how it should've been all along. The results of this year's NME poll (and, for that matter, last year's) demonstrate both the sweeping scope of the Big Clearout and the urgency with which it was needed. This ain't unnatural, Clarence: it's the stagnation of the rock scene in the previous six or seven years that was the horrible aberration. We'll kick the individual results around the room a little in just a second (giving you time to read them in case you were perverse enough to read this bit first), but a quick question to aim you in the right direction. To wit (and to woo):

Is what we have here evidence of a healthy state of flux (rock needs loose bowels) or simply the swapping of one gang of icons (that's a verb: I con, you con, he cons, we con, y'all con, they all con) for another? Is Jean Jacques Burnel gonna take up a residency as top bassist for the rest of his natural? If the answer is yes, then all we've done is set up a new lot of brick walls for the next generation of blitzed-out kamikazes to destroy. If it's no, then here's to next year. These people get sloppy if they think that they can count on your votes (and purchases) whatever they do— check the first three-quarters of this decade for proof — keep 'em on their toes.

CLOSE UP: Last year's top band (by an urban mile) were The Sex Pistols. The demise of the original band and the launch of John Lydon's Public Image Ltd would seem to have given rise to a massive vote of no confidence in the rest of the organisation. Steve Jones (last year's Number Two guitarist) vanishes from the axemen's hall of fame, and Paul Cook (top drummer last year) is similarly non-present in his particular category. Malcolm McLaren holds steady as Number 6 creep, and Lydon acquits himself better than nobly on behalf of PIL as 2nd Most Wonderful Human Being (just behind Sid — as it 'appens — who's only slid down one slot in the bass section despite concentration on extra-musical activities this year), best new group, 2nd best male vocalist (beaten only by last year's winner David Bowie) and second best single of the year.

IMPACTS: Elvis Costello runs for President and cops Best Songwriter, 3rd Best Male Singer, Fifth Best Album and (with the Attractions) 12th Best Group. Inexplicably neither "Chelsea" nor "Radio Radio" registered in the singles list, but there's time enough for that (and Pin-Up Of The Year) next go-round. And we ain't doing a recount for *anyone,* Jake.

IMPACTS: The Clash, The Jam and the Rats rule the roost with devastating effectiveness. The Clash scored Number 2 album and Number 1 single with each member of the band doing the business in the individual sections (Mick Jones as top guitarist, Joe Strummer 6th best singer, Topper Headon Number 3 drummer and Paul Simonon Number 5 bassist, with the added bonus of the Strummer / Jones partnership racking up a Number 5 in the songwriting department).

The Jam accompanied their score as Number Two band by also copping Best Album, 2nd best bassist, 2nd best guitarist, 2nd best songwriter, 5th best drummer and 5th best single ("Tube Station"), while the Rats (still new enough to qualify as 7th best new act) carted off 3rd best band, 4th best male singer, 9th creep of the year, 7th songwriter, 6th pin-up (all these last four for Modest Bob's rather cluttered mantlepiece), 8th best album, 3rd best single and a special one of little Johnnie Fingers as 3rd best keyboard player. The pin-up award also gives the Garrulous One the dubious honour of being this year's top male pin-up. Never mind, Bob — Philip will cover his tears with a manly smile . . .

IMPACTS: John Travolta walked away with creep of the year (no mean achievement when you live in the same galaxy as Tony Blackburn) and saw two of his movies in the Top Ten Flicks. Kate Bush gave Debbie Drool a close run as Pin-Up of the year as well as coming in 3rd in the Female singer department — also topped by La Harry. Tell ya what, Kate . . . next year you and Costello can trade off.

Thin Lizzy are still fave non-New Wave band among folks with otherwise spiky tastes (and it's no coincidence that Lizzy achieved peak popularity at around the same time as the yout' began treading the boards). "Live And Dangerous" copped Number 3 album, Phil Lynott held down his Number 3 bassist slot and Brian Downey achieved long-overdue recognition by nosing into the drummers' section for the first time.

Genesis hung in there — just — and the Stones were rewarded for at least *trying* with "Miss You" and "Some Girls" (and let's not go over all that yet *again* but their '78 product is *so* their best stuff for over five years), Status Quo are either losing ground or their fans aren't quite so keen on filling out coupons this year (can't tell which) and Led Zeppelin should definitely take some steps to assure their public that they still exist (not so easy to take three years off when there's new heroes on the rise).

IMPACTS (2): Magazine fielded two prize-winning instrumentalists and a well-received single (never mind, Howie), Buzzcocks are Serious Business, John Peel still rules the airwaves (and the portly old wombat still goes out and *earns* his yearly *de rigeur* victory), Stiff Little Fingers are eminently watchable this year and whoever started the "UNSIGN THE BANSHEES" campaign is but definitely too late.

Just outside the guitarists' hallowed ten came TRB's Danny Kustow, a 100-watt bridesmaid at No 11. In keeping with the how-low-have-the-mighty-fallen, it was a sad comment on the recent inactivity of one pace-setting picker at least that Jeff Beck, once upon a time one of the world's most excitingly perverse guitarists, failed to garnish even one single solitary vote. (Extract the digit, Jeff . . . even Val Doonican did better).

Margins of victory varied alarmingly. The Clash won by miles in the group section, but in the album section The Jam took 'em by a mere three votes, while only one vote separated Elvis Costello and Siouxsie. Jean Jacques took it with plenty to spare int the bass department while Elvis Costello's songwriting trophy was secured over Paul Weller thanks to a mere four unknown heroes.

John Cooper Clarke will no doubt be astonished to find himself 8th best new group (well, it'll haveta do until we run a Top Poet section), *Revolver* made its point by winning in the TV section . . . and everybody who didn't vote for The Ramones or *The Incredible Hulk* is hereby vilified as a total scumbag by . . .

Charles Shaar Murray

From the musical embers of The Byrds, Spirit, The Flying Burrito Brothers, and Jo Jo Gunne, has risen a new west coast flame in FIREFALL.

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ATLANTIC

BOOKS

The anti pseud avant-garde suss kit

A Concise History Of Modern Music

Paul Griffiths (Thames and Hudson, £2.95)

By its very definition I guess 'avant-garde' music attracts few attempts at Everything-you-ever-wanted-to-know-about . . . paperback documentation . . .

But here it is — no Dada ploy — every last dissonance made Memorex-clear.

This is a commendable book and one we've needed one for a long time. Explorations of Kraftwerk-precursors like Schoenberg and Stockhausen tend to be £10-£20 hardbacks-reviewed-in-*The New Statesman.*

Griffiths steers from the Romantic innovators who turned tables at the century's turn — Debussy, Mahler — through The Big Dis-chords of Schoenberg/Berg/Webern, Stravinsky, the modernist machines of Varese, Cage, Weill, Boulez, and all comers.

Later chapters — "Electronics", "Chance", "Multiplicity" — bring us to date — but here lies my own (and only) discord.

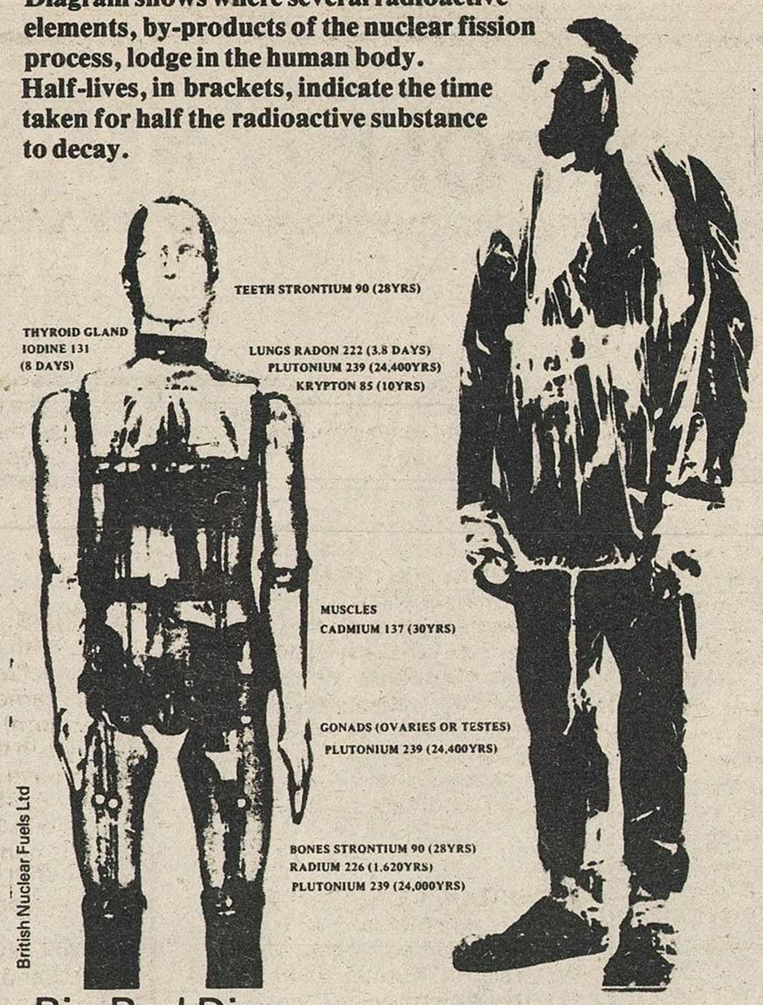
Griffiths builds the history with craftsmansip and clarity but cuts off sharp, in the air, dealing too briefly with much-quoted, ever-obscure names such as Riley and Cardew.

Both text and illustrations (300 plus) cross reference to successive frequency-punches in the other arts, and the parallel is there: expressionism through futurism into newer maps of mathematics.

The book isn't a critique — but there is an un-pushed sense of perspective: the latterday tip-over of the experimental scale(s) into ponderous abstraction, un-self indulgence e.g. *I bang my knee on the piano and I call that experimental, the light bulb falls I call that experimental . . .*

Ah, all those names people love to drop. Now you can tell when they're bullshitting . . .

Ian Penman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THYROID GLAND IODINE 131 (8 DAYS)
LUNGS RADON 222 (3.8 DAYS)
PLUTONIUM 239 (24,400YRS)
KRYPTON 85 (10YRS)
MUSCLES CADMIUM 137 (30YRS)
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From the Big Red Diary

(Pluto Press, £1.50)

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(Available from all good bookshops or from Pluto Press Limited, Unit 10 Spencer Court, 7 Chalcot Road, London NW1 8LH).

Superstars

Alexander Walker (Phaidon) £4.95

The John Travolta Scrapbook

Suzanne Munshower (Souvenir Press, £2.95).

Mr Walker's eye for pictures leaves me cold.

Marilyn Monroe, a *mobile* screen beauty, is shown horribly flat and stilted in one of a series of hideously over-used pictures (on-show-shoulders, white fur, pearl earrings hanging down her neck), her face hard and sweating like a pig beneath her Pan-Stik — a gentle, gorgeous woman looking just like the dumb chain-Mailer bitch Warhol jeered at with his stupid silk-screen.

A still from *The Misfits* would have been much more apt.

Rita Hayworth, whose lovely looks were designed for posing, is shown in a full-length and shoddy still, her ravishing fox-face blurred into anonymity.

This is a massive-diametered, expensive but scrawny book of pictures of Walker's 64 fave cinematic raves. In a couple of pages at the front he attempts 64 bitten-thumb-nail word-portraits in approximately 70 words.

The only personalities that Walker's choice captures are Grace Kelly and Vivien Leigh; the first chocked and smug, the second manic and calm.

Towards the second half the girls are all '60s-natural-blusher and the boys dope-smokers-next-door. Poitier, Nicholson, Dunawaye and Bronson etc.

To me these are not superstars, but film actors, who commit the supreme Hollywood crime of sleeping around and making it seem not glamorous. It's futile to put them in a book alongside Harlow and Garbo and expect them to stick.

Tallulah Bankhead, Veronica Lake, Lauren Bacall amd John Garfield, the B-stars, the alternative superstars, where were they?

One was surprised the way *Superstars* ended on tacky, scruffy Sylvester Stallone, that Walker didn't throw in the exquisite Jordan Hook for good measure seeing as how anyone can become a superstar in his book and how Walker (film critic for London's *Evening Standard)* admired the divine *Jubilee.*

I'll bet Sylvester Stallone would trade the cult audience and semi-credibility to be John Travolta any day. Young, cute and rich — don't it hurt not to be it?

One chickie who's hip to Telly Savalas' pearl about a picture painting a thousand words is Suzanne Munshower, so she's taken a regular book she wrote in 1976 when no one gave a toss about Travolta and made it all FAB and BIG and VISUAL and MODERNNNNNN and stuck it on an unexpecting market again at a vicious price.

And it could sell. It blathers on and on forever, staunchly communicating John's career, family, his looks, his dates (casual, no heavy petting, NOT serious, i.e. you have a chance with him, Spotty of Spalding, so keep buying those posters), even pretending to analyse here and there.

Though the writing is somewhat garbled, repetitive and ass-licking, good luck to Suzanne Munshower for writing about such a worthy subject and cheers to Travolta himself; he seems on the level. I'd much rather little girls were chasing him than some fat hairy rock star.

Yeah, yeah, yeah, worry warts, *Grease* is a lush, lousy-luxurious palliative, but kids growing up need a bit of marshmallow-leather in their tender lives if they aren't to grow up all hard and done-for.

Travolta's the one that they want — so take him, consumerettes, and be gentle when it's finally time to toss him aside and get engaged.

Julie Burchill

Rory Gallagher

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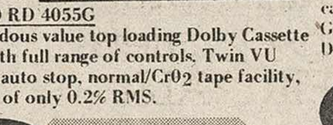

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By ROY CARR

SOME TIME back a friend' borrowed a large number of my jazz albums — and sold them. All I can say is that the rip-off artist had good taste, for among them was my entire Charlie Mingus collection.

Because few people bought Mingus albums when they were originally released, nowadays you've more chance of finding eight score draws than the man's collected works.

And now Mingus is gone. He died on Friday, January 5, in Cuernavaca, Mexico, aged 56, a victim of amyotropic lateral selerosis (also known as Lou Gehrig's disease), which means he didn't die easily.

His last public appearance was on June 18 last year, when, confined to a wheelchair, his once-majestic Mandarin countenance an ashen shadow, he attended the First White House Jazz Festival in Washington.

He was so crippled by his terminal illness that when presenter George Wein asked the specially invited audience to stand and show their appreciation — "I want you to give as great a round of applause as he's ever had in his life to Charlie Mingus" — the man in question was unable to wipe the tears from his eyes as President Carter placed his arms around Mingus' shoulders as a sign of genuine respect and admiration.

From fragmented reports, it would seem that Mingus prepared himself to face the end with the same dignity, defiance and strength of character that had permeated his entire career as one of this century's most gifted, innovative if often neglected (jazz) musicians.

In the same way as death and taxes are inevitable, so too are gatefold memorial albums, and if all the companies in question can get his extensive back catalogue re-issued fast enough, then Charlie Mingus — who reportedly never sold more than 50,000 copies of any one album during his lifetime, 15,000 being an average figure — may sell more records in 30 days than he did in 30 years.

One thing is certain. Upon the release of a still unfinished/untitled album for which Joni Mitchell supplied the lyrics to six brand new Mingus charts plus two previously recorded titles (his famous Lester Young tribute "Goodbye Pork Pie Hat" and "Self-Portrait In Three Colours") Charlie Mingus will be *the* name to drop in the most un-hip of hip circles.

So Mingus the man is dead.

Do we eulogise, mourn, re-assess or self-consciously attempt to excuse outselves for not giving him the same microscopic attention in life that he will no doubt garner posthumously.

What's to be done?

A printed tribute. A mark of respect. A means of clearing the public conscience. The done thing. And indirectly/directly a means of arming sales reps with sufficient ammo to move both old and re-packaged Mingus albums by the box-full when in the past they encountered resistance selling them (except in specialist shops) in quantities of more than one.

You can hear the schpiel: "I'm the area rep for Vulture Records, you know, the label that released all those early Hendrix tapes. Well, we're doing this big push on Charlie Mingus. Take my tip, do yourself a favour and stock up now because he's on the next Joni Mitchell album, so you're bound to pick up an extra impulse sales. Whatcha want, the coloured vinyls or the picture discs?"

Charlie Mingus was born in Nogales, Arizona on April 22, 1922 and raised in the Los Angeles black ghetto of Watts.

Encouraged by Britt Woodman, he first took up the trombone before switching to cello. By 16 he was studying bass under Red Callender. Soon after came five years of tutorship under former N.Y. Philharmonic Orchestra alumnus H. Rheinschagen, then, in company with Eric Dolphy, a course in composition from Lloyd Reese who, legend has it, instilled in his pupils to regard all the world as musical and therefore include natural sounds (birds, animals, the wind, the soundtrack of the streets) in their musical conception.

Mingus worked his way through the band of Louis Armstrong, Kid Ory, Lionel Hampton (with whom he made his wax debut, "Mingus Fingers"), Billy Taylor, Red Norvo before throwing in his lot with the burgeoning Bop Brigade. Along with Bird, Dizzy, Miles, Monk, Max and Bud (check out the Quintet Of The Year "Jazz At Massey Hall" LP) and a whole host of others, he helped re-define the direction of jazz.

By 1951 Mingus was the man doing the hiring.

Now, the double bass has never been high in the list of instruments used to bring about radical changes. It has its share of virtuosi, but primarily the role has always been that of the dependable anchor.

With few notable exceptions, most bass players recognised their station in life.

Charlie Mingus was one of the exceptions.

He emerged as arguably the all-time Titan of his chosen instrument, transforming the bass from an ensemble role into a bona fide solo voice.

But he never made any of his Jazz Workshop aggregations purely vehicles for his improvisational prowess. Because first and formost Mingus was a bandleader.

For nearly a quarter of a century he used the Jazz Workshop to spearhead the controversial transition from Be-Bop/Hard Bop into the (then) unexplored realms of avant garde, and always stayed one jump ahead of most of the pack.

Around the time of this musical revolution many aspiring musicians viewed the New Wave (as it was termed) as a means of complete musical anarchy.

Mingus, however, used freedom of self-expression wisely.

An eclectic composer, his work was quickly compared to that of Duke Ellington (whom he passionately admired). And such comparisons were not misplaced. Like The Duke, Mingus not only possessed a deep understanding of the myriad roots of Americana but had the ability to interpret such knowledge in what he termed his "extended form" compositions.

These pieces were more often than not musical minefields.

With almost-permanent drummer Dannie Richmond as cornerstone and multiple-drive motor, Mingus carefully selected such potential young bucks as Eric Dolphy, Jackie McLean, Benny Golson, Roland Kirk, Don Pullen, Jimmy Knepper, Clifford Jordan, John Handy, Jaki Byard, Booker Ervin — to finger but a few . And let them loose over his musical assault course.

The policy: "So long as they play their parts with feeling, they can solo any way they want to."

Albums like "Pithecanthropus Erectus", "Mingus Oh Yeah", "Clown", "Mingus Ah Um", "Dynasty", "Mingus Plays Mingus" and the three-album pack "The Great Concert Of Charles Mingus" recorded in Paris in April '64 (still available at a special budget price) substantiate that in keeping with the man's character the music was pure, sublime emotion, ranging from the serene to the savage, the provocative to the pithy, the sacred to the sardonic.

These albums just don't reflect Mingus' magnificience or his ability to groom gunslingers for careers of their own; they exerted a profound influence beyond the realms of jazz. At one extreme they touched the British R&B Hammond organ/horns bands, at the other much of Zappa's outpourings and Beefheart's "Trout Mask Replica" period.

Among the first things to go in Mingus' New Broom-Sweeps Clean policy were the repetitive, steady rhythms and cliched chord progressions that had all but ground jazz to a standstill.

In their place he and his musicians re-adapted with vivid imagination such long-discarded aces-up-the-sleeve as simultaneous multiple soloing, counterpoint, tempo shifts, and honking and screaming.

However, when it came to handing out credit he was overlooked in favour of more commercially successful acts.

Like so many artists who have set themselves against existing trends, Mingus suffered dearly for his belligerence, impertinance, refusal to compromise, and also for his birth-right.

Long before American blacks received (allegedly) a fair social shake-down, Mingus openly demanded equal rights.

In his autobiography *Beneath The Underdog* and on tracks like "Fables Of Faubus" and "Free Cell Block F. 'Tis Nazi U.S.A.") he publically castigated those who opposed integration.

He himself may have been labelled a racist because of the strength of his black identity, but bearing in mind the abuse and degradation he endured for his music and his skin, it is not remarkable that his passion should have run so high.

In 1977, just when Mingus and his devotees had virtually resigned themselves to being a medium-sized minority cult, his "Three Or Four Shades Of Blue" LP suddenly scored prime-time airplay.

The future looked (for the first time in years) on the up-and-up. Then tragedy struck. His health failed — as did a follow-up album, "Cumbia And Jazz Fusion".

Last April, Mingus recorded one more still-unreleased album ("Me, Myself And Eye") and the following month began collaborating with Joni Mitchell on a project which the lady had described as a "dramatic life lesson."

Apparently what Mingus (originally) had in mind was a spoken word/music concept of T. S. Elliot's *Four Quartets:* for which Mitchell was to be Eliot's voice.

Having read the work, Mitchell at first politely informed Mingus that she found the concept beyond her scope: "I would rather distill the Bible than T. S. Eliot." But later she changed her mind.

Preliminary sessions were conducted in the Big Apple, but sessions-proper were held in LA using Herbie Hancock, Wayne Shorter, Jaco Pastorius and Peter Erskine.

No date has been scheduled for either completion or possible release.

It would be futile to even attempt to condense the career of Charlie Mingus into one feature. The music — if you can find it — is out there and that's where you'll find the *real* story. All that's left to be said is that 1979 will probably prove to be Charles Mingus' (he prefered to be called Charles) biggest-ever year.

That's show business. You can shove it!

ALBUMS

Joan Jett blacked by Barbara Fry

Runaways — a total state of California

THE RUNAWAYS
And Now . . . The Runaways *(Mercury)*

The terms are at once familiar and bizarre, charged with meaning and strangely vacuous: 'street,' 'action,' 'hungry and hot,' 'rock 'n' roll,' 'teenage,' 'weekend,' 'queen.' For the first time since the last time: The Runaways, and their swinging teenbeat romanticism for swinging mid-20's!!!

The only real thing The Runaways — or rivals too numerous and played out to mention — have in common with adolescence is their confusion, the confusion evinced by all those terms. Terms which only mean anything in their own, sealed, silly little context.

Just like teenagers in fact — most of whom, at one time or another, like to be seen to be confused (as long as it's a confusion which suggests maturity and depth). The actual confusion which lies under the Adult Confusion is covered up with a variety of things: arm-wrestling or existentialism, after-shave or underarm deoderant, romance of rock 'n' roll (as long as it's rock 'n' roll which is little more than mirror-image comfort).

Q: Who needs it?

A: Ageing pop-punk romanticists, ageing Sociology lecturers turned neutral rock critics, record companies, magazines for the teenie *girl* audience (Sham and Rats, you look real valid in *Jackie).*

Terms such as The Runaways, and people older and more obviously so than they are wont to flog — look at those Rolling Stones, Dad! — are part of the dominant tradition of beat music, its empiricisms, evasions, and ignorances, which deny certain postions to certain people, most specifically to women/girls.

Positive discrimination for women/girls who break out of the stereotypes — lead singer, tambourine shaker, female vocal group, MOR/intellectual boudoir mistress, etc. — is well in line . . .

Only, The Runaways, through all their manifestaions, never seemed to get past a broadcast — albeit vociferous — of their passivity, their acceptance of role-playing: "I'm *your* Cherry Bomb."

Initially, this might have been excused for a number of reasons. That they were actually occupying that space in rock normally reserved for macho men with complex inferiority and cotton wool down their trousers was a good enough step; they were young and naive; worse, they had been brought up in California (how many Californians does it take to mend a light bulb? Four, one to replace it and three to share the experience); they 'looked good.'

Joan Jett's insistence on her possession of "balls" leaves me in some confusion. The dubious introduction of 'balls' or any of beat music's attendant phallic-fixated language rather sucks . . .

That these most sensitive of the exterior organs should be identified, in beat terminology and mythology, with some dislocated notion of gusto or bravado seems faintly absurd — another facet of our rockaboogie tradition.

The Runaways have now escaped the withered grasp of infamous L.A. android Kim Fowley (the longest distance between two hits) — who now has Hellen Reddy to promote — but they're still managed by one of those disgusting men things: "Toby B. Mamis, American Entertainment Management Cor."

"And Now . . ." has the Runaways dressed up as *men* on the front cover, sex kittens on the back; the leather's gone, leopard skin and tight blouses are back — the missing slink between *Pretty Baby* and *Charlie's Angels* — more objects for you to mould and hold. (Just *pretend* of course!)

The Runaways aren't gonna scare lumpen sex-object attitudes out of anyone, they're gonna reinforce them.

And hey-ho! The first song is called "Saturday Night Special"! The equation between the protagonist — who is a *"Saturday Night Special / She's young and easily bought!"* — and the miniature revolver of the same (slang) name evades me. Could it be that Jett is pointing to the parallel between how easy it is to buy a gun in America, and thus reap damage, and how the same moral context forces young girls into selling — shudder — their bodies? One thinks of *Taxi Driver,* Vietnam, snuff movies.

But, unfortunately, all The Runaways are actually thinking about is *"I'm looking for action / I'm hungry and hot / You wanna know why? / That's easy — why not?"*

Things are complicated further by the line *"I live for the weekend / It's part of the script",* which just about sums up the hollow 'street queen' (i.e. screwable) myth rat-trap they're caught in, and are apparently enjoying.

Which is not to deny the importance and place of *style* in rock, just to re-emphasize that so much of what passes as 'good rock' — music or criticism — is so tied up with its own ill-sorted, safe, marketable notions of 'street life' that it sees no real hint of anything beyond them — as suggested in this paper's recent review of the Jilted John LP.

The Runaways crunch through their version of Slade's "Mama Weer All Crazee Now" like an air-brushed navvy, this presumably constituting a return to their 'roots'. Joan Jetts's youth (or that version of it which sounds cool) was one of sun'affluence, pills, and ritzy glam-rock discos.

But I was born in 1959 — hi John and Julie! — which makes me a 'street cool' *teenager,* still, and The Runaways vain puppets who've passed 20 and don't want anyone to know: valley of the barbitu .rate dolls.

It doesn't work. This limbo music is a mix of heavy metal and glamrock as much as anyone from Japan to the Banshees is, and any one who claims otherwise is living in the past with it. Like Eagles, Ronstadt, et al, this is Californian for people who avoid decision making like the tax-man.

The hysterical empty-headedness of The Runaways knows no bounds — and even spills over into reactionary 'politics' in "Takeover", which is all about those nasty un-American Commie bastard Russians taking over LA and New York with a "weather machine"! I ask you girls, who *want* to take over LA?

And what better way to round off a dumb, regressive, sexist, heavy metal album than with "Black Leather", a song specially written for the occasion by our very own Steve Jones (who bears an uncanny resemblance to *Tom* Jones these days)? You too can live in your own little B-movie — Aloha, Steve and Joanie!

Ian Penman

Unbeguiled

J. GEILS BAND
Sanctuary *(EMI America)*

"Take outcha false teeth, mama . . . I wanna ssssssssuck on your gums!"

The J. Geils Band came over here in 1972, and I had the great good fortune to see them not once but twice. Were they great or what? A solid R&B / soul / blue / rock revue band just as sharp and sleazy as you please, supercharged and revved up to insane energy levels. A bunch of streetcorner madmen pumping it up and pounding it out, crunching and crackling and keeping that dance beat going all the while . . . you can check out the '72 live "Full House" album and cop the way they sounded then if you don't believe me.

The way they looked was something else again: shades, leather, just enough sparkle to drive the visual all the way to the back of the hall . . . you could even forgive 'em for having beards, that's how good they were. J. Geils were just about the last band Atlantic signed who actually belonged to the grand Atlantic tradition of the hippest, flashiest, rootsiest R&B — after Geils it was just toothpaste like any other record label.

However, the Geils band ran into the same roadblock that always rears itself in the path of great white R&B bands: what do you do when you run out of great oldies to revibe? Answer: you start writing your own, and that's where the hits shoot the fan. After that ace live album the Geils band began to lose ground, subsequent albums got patchier and patchier and after awhile I lost track of them.

Until now: their eighth or ninth album, their debut for a new label and how low have the mighty fallen. The rule in rock says that once you've been successful you can't back down, and with the American mass market the way it is sticking to R&B guns means — to change metaphors in midstream — going down with the ship. Here J. Geils cling to a smooth FM-rock life raft that sounds more like Foreigner with a harp player than anything else. The backsleeve pics tell it all: singer Peter Wolf and keyboard player Seth Justman (who wrote all the songs on the album) share a large central pic, and the other four are splayed out in smaller individual pics, with guitarist Geils and harpist Magic Dick are exiled to the edges — such is the balance of power.

Producer Joe Wissert has smoothed down the band's rampaging roar to an easy sluggish cruise, the standard compressed, Dolbyised ball-of-wool American noise, through which Magic Dick's perky, poignant harp pokes like a knitting-needle of past glories. The Wolf-Justman songs are mostly mush, and Wolf himself sounds unnaturally subdued.

The nadir is plumbed at the end of the first side, when Wolf, Justman and drummer Stephen Bladd gather round the piano for a bit of that old shaky three-part harmony. For the one-time R&B champions of the world to descend to warmed-over Crosby, Stills and Nash is a singularly unpleasant omen for the future. Even the promisingly entitled "Wild Man" opens with the kind of piano curlicues which you always get when the balance of power in a band shifts too far in favour of the keyboard player.

The band don't get off their asses until the very last cut on the second side — by which time it's almost too late — when, against the sound of stomping studio feet, Geils tears a series of rampaging chords out of his Paul and the band takes off into "Jus' Can't Stop Me", which is pretty tame fare by the standards of the Geils band of old but is the very stuff of rock and roll heaven compared to what's gone before.

Certainly the J. Geils Band have been good enough for long enough to deserve a little indulgence when they try to make a buck according to the standards of the time, but "Sanctuary" is certainly nothing to write home about. Here's hoping that when they hop the Atlantic and return to Britain a few weeks from now they'll still lay a taste of their old form on us. Forget this shit . . . "Whammer Jammer", baby!

"Whammer Jammer!"

Charles Shaar Murray

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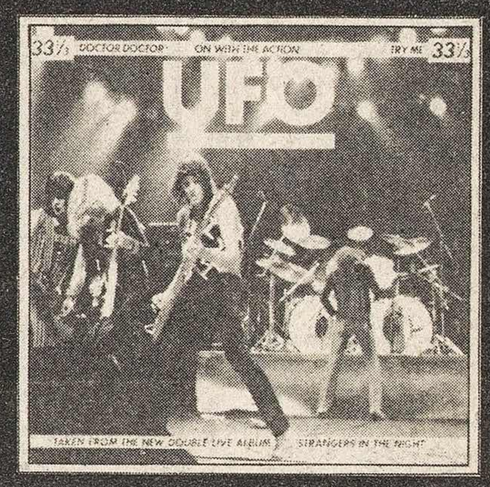

Chrysalis Records & Tapes

Memo from Euro-chic Central

ENO, MOEBIUS, ROEDELIUS
After The Heat *(Sky Import)*
CONRAD SCHNITZLER
Con *(Egg Import)*
WOLFGANG REICHMANN
Wunderbar *(Sky Import)*

Missive received from Euro-Chic Central, memo attached reads: "Enclosed three items as scheduled. Suggest appropriate swift-sell terminology, e.g. 'More modern metal mood machine music made in West Germany' or 'Hi-fashion fun for all the future-present family'. Ends."

"After The Heat" is the second Eno and Cluster collaboration and, although probably recorded at the same time as the non-committal "Cluster & Eno", a much better brand and brew. Quite why I'm not sure, but "ATH" seems a more purposeful proposition and anyone taken with Eno's own exemplary "Music For Films" will warm to this like fleas to flesh.

Although their penchant for soft-screen electronic soundscaping has very finite limitations, E & C consistently avoid obvious and overt repetition of texture and timbre. Most of the ten sketches here are essentially simple and schematic, relying more on technique and treatment than on innate sense and structure. The titles are not so much descriptive as suggestive; you can dream or doze them anywhichway you want.

The concurrent triptych of "Luftschloss", "The Shade" and "Old Land" is notably atmospheric and impressionistic, discreet or direct, your own choice, descendant from Debussy and Ravel. Over, on side two, "Base & Apex" tops the tank, a churning, visceral riff-cycle based on an almost Gregorian scale, a courtly cyber-dance.

"Broken Head" also scores steadily, despite Eno's intoning speciously 'alienated' — and alienating (singing, oh how I wish he would *stop*) — lyrics; a disco-negative robo-stomp rolling and stumbling with neo-Frippertronic guitars, it could just as easily have sparked off Bowie's "Beauty And The Beast".

Fortunately "The Belldog", a chill counterpoint of electric and electronic instrumentation, also overrides its adEnoidal verbiage, whereas "T'zima N'arki" doesn't — even the slice 'n' saw basslines of Can's Holger Czukay can't overcome the tape-twitched inanity of Eno's 'Arabic' vocals.

But, lyrical lapses aside, "After The Heat" makes sound sense. Reichmann's "Wunderbar", however, is far from wonderful. A Dusseldorfer whose credentials escape me, he presents himself as a Kraftwerk cast-off wearing blue-face, black shirt and blue tie and programmes all his machines himself.

What a clever clone. The results are hopelessly derivative. Muddle and merge Kraftwerk, Neu and Tangerine Dream into a lowest common (market) denominator and leave it at that. No, just leave it. Pointless opportunism.

Meanwhile Conrad Schnitzler was once a member of T. Dream but, like his producer Peter Baumann, seems to have survived to tell another tale. "Con" is a mostly intelligent and articulate electronic album.

"Electric Garden" opens uncertainly, an unfortunate revamp of the sequencer format Herbie Hancock deployed on "Sextant's" "Rain Dance". Possibly accidental but certainly incidental, it segues into "Ballet Statique", a simple, unadorned syn-circle of surprising charm.

But side two is the one, ambitiously environmental, distinctly unsettling and infinitely more industrial than anthing tossed off by the endlessly culpable Throbbing Gristle. "Zug", "Metall 1" and "Black Nails" are mechanical in the most literal sense: machine sound, neither music nor muzak.

Missive returned to Euro-Chic Central, memo attached reads: "Enclosed three items as processed. Suggest deletion of all swift-sell copy. Contents better served by emphasis on merit not modernity. Ends."

Angus MacKinnon

ENO. Pic: PENNIE SMITH

VARIOUS ARTISTS
The Sire Machine Turns You Up *(Sire)*

"Ramona" from The Ramones, "True Confessions" from The Undertones, "Hand Of Law" from Radio Birdman, and "Magic Love" from The Squares, all sound like rock music to me, so that gets rid of them all.

"Ain't It Fun" by The Dead Boys was produced by Felix Pappalardi, "Tore Me Down" by The Flamin' Groovies was produced by Dave Edmunds, "Mighty Idy" by DMZ was produced by Flo & Eddie, "Who's Been Sleeping Here" by Tuff Darts was produced by three people, so that gets rid of all of . . .

The Paley Brothers' "Come Out And Play" sounds happy, so lets get rid of all . . .

Martha Velez's "Get Up Stand Up" is reggae for tourists (anywhere), so that gets rid of . . .

Richard Hell's "Blank Generation" and "You Gotta Lose" have been available (in varying versions) on US EP, Stiff EP, Stiff boxed set, Sire 12" EP, Sire album, and these compilation versions are nearer The Only Ones than Husymans, so that gets rid . . .

Ditto Patti Smith's "Hey Joe," which is pretentious as shit anyway, so that gets . . .

Which leaves The Rezillos, and "My Baby Does Good Sculptures" which is great. But alreay available on a 45. But The Rezillos are dead anyway, so that . . .

So . . . a completely disposable album. The ultimate rock compilation?

Ian Penman

DAN HARTMAN
Instant Replay *(Blue Sky)*

Had this album existed without any singles being released from it, I would be jostling to get a page review on the cover. As it is, it's almost redundant. With the *real* "Instant Replay" take still available on import (it's edited here) and the other two major tracks — "This Is It" and "Countdown" — just released domestically in LP-sized glory, there's little to make the mothership worthy of four pounds whatnot.

All the unreleased tracks are on side two, but to be honest they're rather slight when held against the big bullets. It'll cost you about sixty pence more to snap up the twelve inchers, but it'll take a year to wipe the smile off your face and the shuffle in your feet will never quit. Dan handles nearly every instrument and vocal here gathered and — never mind about will be — is already a magnificent champion of the discotheque.

And in the discos, we don't really acknowledge albums anyway.

Danny Baker

CHAS & DAVE
Rockney *(EMI)*

No wonder, really, that EMI have seen fit to procure the services of Mr. Hedges and Mr. Peacock, and give their "Rockney" bash a bit of a push in the re-release stakes.

Chas and Dave are funky in the original sense, meaning that while they appease your lugholes with nifty schticks they give off a vaguely unpleasant smell. So from the faded in boogie woogie of "That's What It's All About", the impression gained is one of walking into a crowded bar and listening to a nun's-twat tight outfit delivering the goods amidst beer slops and stale fags.

"Strummin' ", "Massage Parlour", "I'm In Trouble" and "Big Fat Rat" display a swell turn of phrase and show a clean pair of heels to a few other Cockney pretenders (Street Band, anyone?) while "Edmonton Green", featuring coyly deployed brass and piano, has some of the quiet nostalgia and plangent charm associated with Randy Newman.

Blimey, even Laurel and Hardy would've been proud to have sung "Sling Your Hook".

A good record? Not many.

Monty Smith

LARRY CARLTON
Larry Carlton *(Warner Brothers)*

This bloke is a proper musician.

By this I mean that he can actually play the guitar. He has evidently spent most of his life sitting at home struggling with scales, runs, arpeggios and other fearsome beasts, which may go quite a way towards explaining why, for all his almost frightening expertise, Larry Carlton is a hideous, screaming *bore.*

Jazz and rock are both passionate musics, but Carlton's sanded-down, French-polished muzak is totally lacking in energy, excitement or emotion. I don't recall him being this boring in The Crusaders, but left to himself he reverts to type: D-U-L-L.

The consummate ses sion musician. A proper musician. Evidently, all those years of practice and hard work have made Larry a dull boy. He'd've done better to spend his adolesence stealing cars and staying out past his bedtime.

Charles Shaar Murray.

IMPORTS

Remember that well-used maxim about everyone being famous for five minutes? As far as the **Easybeats** are concerned it goes double.

For those audicious Aussies enjoyed their full 300 seconds worth of top poppery in 1966/68 via "Friday On My Mind" and "Hello, How Are You" — and currently, though the band is no more (Vanda and Young were parading their talents as Flash And The Pan last time I tuned into Oz) they're back on top of the collectors' heap as the greatest "if onlys" of 'em all.

You know the pitch . . . If only the Easys had been afforded the same back-up, support and direction as The Beatles, Rolling Stones, Kinks, etc. The sleeve notes to "The Shame Just Drained" (Albert Productions), the latest chunk of Easy wax to fill the import racks, reiterate this theme.

Whether, given a different shuffle of cards, things could have turned out all sunshine and lollipops for the Easybeats, remains speculation. But at least "Shame Just Drained" provides an opportunity to hear 15 Easy tracks that have never appeared on disc before.

Five of the cuts stem from a Glyn Johns produced album that was scrapped due to recording contract politics, while the remaining items include a number of demo tracks cut at London's Central Sound studio, "Baby I'm A Coming", the first track the Easys laid down at Abbey Road (their first recorded-in-Britain track in fact), and "Little Queenie", a made-in-Oz version of the Berry rocker. The tapes employed generally sound a mite or two on the rough side and the music, which is pure "beat group" era — with hints of psychedeilia and megaphone rock — will hardly cause gasps from the gallery.

So, as evidence of neglected greatness, it falls flat on its Opera House. But as a well-produced artifact (the gatefold sleeve comes replete with lotsa good snapshots, a discography and lengthy notes), "Shame Just Drained" is a beaut proposition.

Back in Rodentsville, **Good Rats** have emerged with a chunk of cheddar they proclaim as "Tasty" (Rat City). And although it's not the Grade A big cheese, it's easy to see why these Long Island heavies have found enough to gnaw on for the past ten years. For the Rats — Peppi Marchello (lead vocal), Mickey Marchello (guitar), John Gatto (guitar), Lenny Kotke (bass) and Joe Franco (drums) — are extra clever members of the heavy metal Muridae.

Amid wayward thrashes they slot sprightly jazz rockers ("Klash Ka Bob"), neo-ManTran novelties ("Fred Upstairs And Ginger Snappers"), a ditty about how songwriters from Gershwin through to Peppi Marchello himself have always had a tough deal ("Songwriter"), and even a hot shot relating exactly how much class and refinement the Rats possess in relation to other heavies of their ilk ("Tasty").

Unfortunately, versatility doesn't always equate with quality and the odds are that Good Rats, despite their cult following, will remain in the lower order trap for yonks to come.

Fred Dellar

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"Eye ah eye Commodore deliver the goods for you and yours." Pic by Denis O'Regan

EARTH, WIND AND FIRE
Best Of — Volume One ***(CBS)***
THE COMMODORES
Greatest Hits ***(Motown)***

Earth Wind and Fire, who as bold as brass — an eight piece swing band are neither disco nor soul, funk nor jazz, 'black' nor white.

An outfit that takes the flimsiest of piano melodies, the most cliched of lyrics and — with flashing energy, unsuppressable efferverscence and crack production — dish up some of the crispest forty-fives to thunder from a pub's P.A.

So where's the strength? Well, like the very best pop groups, EW&F have a definite sound, a conglomerate of needle staccato horns and a vocal harmony raised in shrill scat and layered as thick as a submarine sandwich and, of course, once they've whacked home one hard hook it's repeat until there's only one chorus on the chart. Brainwash? No. More of a legs rinse, because these fellows can cause the odd 'arris to shake.

From the sterile swing of "Shining Star" to the pure, heartfelt kick of the mighty "Singasong" (the finest point on the album), this is one of the few 'best ofs' that make the job of collecting patchy albums redundant. Even the seemingly pointless 'big band' arrangement on The Beatles' "Got To Get You Into My Life" seems stronger here set as the albums opener. "Saturday Nite" is still too weak to be half as funky as it sets out to be though, and "Fantasy" remains a little over the sweetness limit, especially as the similar and superior "That's The Way Of The World" is also about to show it up.

However, major plusses abound. The breezily cutting, tritely worded "Shining Star" and the power, drive and crisp rush of the current "September" single which — along with the already mentioned "Singasong" — are the platter's true twi-night double-header champions.

Earth, Wind and Fire are ritzy showbiz right down to their lousy tinsel stage suits and they have a dozey hang up/sales gimmick in mysticism which is in full evidence on the brash jacket. But the plastic's black and you can turn it up loud, so get yourself a smattering of what makes the light show bristle and stop being such a snob. Because you know these tracks as well as I do — it's just you'll have to whip off Public Image and learn to loosen your laces.

With the Commodores, the knives don't cut so smoothly. This gathering is too cloudy to run as zappily as their chums', the highs merely hillocks and the trenches dank and stodgy. The Comms are probably better from a rock standpoint — what with wah-wahs, natty funk and whatnot — but the fresh air is made stale by the laboured 'get downs'.

Whereas EW&F get smoochy with all the warmth of a polar bear's hooter, they still manage to get away with it because of harmony and the crisply detached arrangement of their, erm, instruments. The Commodores croon with better vocal heating and finer melodies, yet in the end can border on McCartneyia despite their tenderness. The mammoth "Three Times A Lady" is a fine case in point with all that 'feeling' stifled in the twee

EW&F: "Wot he say?"

throwaway summation by our man now that he and the girl have *"come to the end of our rainbow . . "*. I don't think Al Green or The Chi-LItes would've recorded that, though Barbra Streisand would've. (Thought: There's not enough syllables in either 'Man' or 'bloke', for the title so substitute 'Lady' with 'geezer' even if the romantic tint suffers a little).

Maybe I'm being a bit unfair by pointing at the group's weaker — although commercially more successful — angle. When they really shift they can boil, like the thumping "Brickhouse" funk, or my favourite son of the 'Dores, "Slippery When Wet" which sadly loses that extra edge on 33⅓. Also, their first single and hit — instrumental "Machine Gun" — hasn't been overtaken by U.S. telecop themes and still has flair.

But the LP overall is hardly essential and, to be fair to the band, neither is it entirely their best work.

So there you go — two black American bands produce albums without a disco track between them shock.

Danny Baker

U ROY
Jah Son Of Africa ***(Virgin Front Line)***

I ROY
World On Fire ***(Virgin Front Line)***

Around the Kingston music biz DJs are like hired guns around Dodge City; always plenty of cool young dudes hanging out waiting for an assignment, for a producer who needs a hit job (geddit?), the chance to make some dunny and enhance a reputation. And alway still younger dudes steps forward to prove *they're* the fastest verbal draw in town.

By this analogy U Roy and I Roy are gargled albeit respected veterans who've taken their reps and hard earned dollars and found a more sedate lifestyle, edged aside by time and younger sharpshooters.

Still, even they have to step in the arena and do some fancy shooting from time to time. Although U Roy 'The Originator' no longer has hits either here or at home he still has a faithful following, and all his albums have sold over 100,000 copies thanks to momentous sales down there Nigeria way. Maybe that's why "Jah Son Of Africa" comes on hideous scarlet vinyl. Or maybe it's to attract colour-conscious rock punters who picked up on U Roy's fine "Dread In A Babylon" set of a couple of years back.

His two albums since then have been of strictly routine interest however. U Roy long ago gave up modifying his screech'n'stutter style of delivery, and while both that and his voice are still acceptable enough, lyrically he's remained uninspired, igniting on only a couple of cuts each outing.

"Jah Son Of Africa" follows the same pattern. Prince Tony's production remains seductive as usual and no doubt U Roy's toasts of "Exodus" and "Rivers Of Babylon" will prove good commercial fayre both here and in Africa, but there's no escaping the album's overall sluggishness, relieved only by "Herbman Skanking" (to the Gladiators "Stick A Bush" rhythm) and the stately sway of Brent Dowe's "Things You Love" rhythm, here transmuted to "Love In The Arena".

In recent times I Roy's long playing offerings have been more disappointing still, and his last, "Heart Of A Lion", plumbed new depths of unrelieved talkover tedium. Recently, however, the man and his hat have been showing signs of renewed life, notably on The Maytones "Money Trouble" discomix *("Down there in Nigeria, lot o' yen y'know")*, and "World On Fire" is his liveliest album in some time.

Not that I Roy's changed *his* style either since his fastest gun days, but at least he's largely abandoned his penchant for lapsing into nursery rhymes and stock phrases and sounds like he's trying again, sometimes, as on "Dog War", with excellent results. He's helped by a bunch of smart, if familiar, Channel One rhythms, and hindered by a truly gruesome cover.

For all that you're better off buying the six year old "Presenting I Roy" or U Roy's even more aged "Version Galore" classic that Front Line wisely reissued last year. Better still, wade through a bunch of current 45s and seek out the fastest gun in town; right now I man give Trinity a clear edge over Zukie and (see't deh) Clint Eastwood.

Neil Spencer

CRAZY HORSE
Crazy Moon ***(RCA Import)***

Neil Young's more electrically orientated fans might have surmised that this Crazy Horse album, their first since the dispensable "Crooked Lane", will supply the necessary *joie de vivre* and wholesale lust that "Comes A Time" manifastly failed to deliver.

Well, yes and no. Musically the offerings are generally close to the given norm, Ralph Molina, Frank Sampedro and Billy Talbot having absorbed sufficient know-how from the old moaner's book of tricks to ensure that the hooks become limpets on second and third hearing. Too bad that in the lyrical and vocal departments said trio can't whip up anything remotely original.

Young himself (cue reverent genuflexions, Johnny Rotten fan club scarves and Devo hat) steps aside to let his trusted co-Horses bask in the glow of his own furious lead guitar work (five tracks in all) but even here I'm afraid we've twigged poor Neil's easy-to-learn formula one too many times. In fact all Young's solos sound like "Hurricane" and the best of "Zuma" re-visited.

The secret is to turn the master switch past maximum, opt for continuous descent and play every other note as a harmonic. It still succeeds of course but methinks Neil Young gets a pretty cushy ride from my illustrious colleagues when it comes to examining his merits. Long may you run, old fruit, David Crosby was crucified for less.

Lowering of critical resistance and an empty stomach keep the material here palatable, enjoyable if high grade wallpaper murals are your brief. Closer scrutiny won't let me swallow the juvenile moon in June predictability of the Crazy Horse collective, mostly songs about holding on with that special girl on the dusty road to New Orleans in true grit style, aching for the memory of that wild west whorehouse where livin' was easy and your ranchero bijou pad with hot and cold running noses didn't burn to the ground.

Best of a sickly batch are Sampedro's "Downhill" and "Too Late Now" with the closers on both sides, "New Orleans", "Thunder And Lightning", plus "Going Down Again" (save us, save us) taking the honours for rollicking bar room Southern fried re-hash.

Unfortunately, with records kissing off a large percentage of the average man's weekly screw the good news is lost in action. High marks for the toons and the Mulligan, Briggs engineering. Nought for the rest.

At least Nicolette Larson didn't show up.

Max Bell

RHYTHM OF RESISTANCE
The Music of Black South Africa
(Virgin)

Given that I know nothing about African music as such, but a bit about musics originating from the continent, I was very disappointed with this, the sound track of the equally disappointing wet liberal documentary (see *Thrills*).

Two tracks from the blind commercial pop singer Babsy Mlangeni, and two from Mparanyana & The Cannibals are pleasant, Westernized popular music. Whether subtleties in rhyme or reason are blows against Babylon is anyone's guess — but it doesn't sound 'radical' in any way — unlike, say, the explicit departures of dub-powered Jamaican music.

Two tracks from the acapella vocal group Ladysmith Black Mambazo do hint in their scales and harmonies at a religious, spiritual, political hierarchy and history, although the group sound fairly restrained — they *are* a national success and may have been diluted as national successes are wont to be.

The Mahotella Queen and Abafana Baseghudeni — five male vocalists and five female vocalists with the same backing band are an energetic but fairly weak hybrid of showbiz, jokey protest, and bluebeaty rhythms.

Sipho and Jonny are a black singer / guitarist and a white instrumentalist who mix Western and Zulu protest methods to moderately charming effect.

The only music which strikes you the way you expect it to, comes from Malombo, with Phillip Tabane on guitar backed by two drummers and bass. The fusion is one of slight-street-jazz and rounded percussion, with an echo heading toward JA. Even this, I suspect, stands out only because of the album's low quality and my high expectations.

Where is the thronging jazz, the tumbling, repetitive instrumental workouts, the Africa roots? Why isn't it represented?

This is a K-Tel collection. I listened to a new Phillip Wilson Trio album after "Rhythm Of Resistance" and heard a lot more rhythm, a lot more resistance, and a lot more Africa there.

A printing mistake on the sleve note sms it up: "They have sold over four million records without *comprising* their authentic South African sound."

Ian Penman

YOUNG: "Where's the damn band gone, man?"
PUNTER: "Thank Christ the bar's open." Pic by Matthew Taylor

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SILVER SCREEN

'Doctor' Howard Duff cops a feel of "Nympho" Mia Farrow at A Wedding.

A Marriage Made In America (GOD BLESS 'ER etc.)

A Wedding

Directed by Robert Altman
Starring Geraldine Chaplin, Howard Duff and Mia Farrow
(20th Century Fox)

One of America's most capable directors, Altman remains one of her most capricious. Although obsessed by America and Americana, he's patented a loose yet highly literate style that seems to owe much more to European cinema than to the hard-hatted hero-zero hacking of so many of his immediate peers. A prime paradox of a film maker he may be, but I'd still move that Altman made the Euro-American connection aesthetically sound and safe long before Wim Wenders and *Kings Of The Road* or *The American Friend.*

Altman pushed to prominence with *M.A.S.H.,* a fickle feature about the antics of US field medics in the Korean conflict that referred in reality to Viet Nam and that fired far more fiercely than the TV sit-series based thereon. With the exception of *images,* a gruelling and gruesome psycho-thriller set in Ireland, his later films have kept closer to home and heartland.

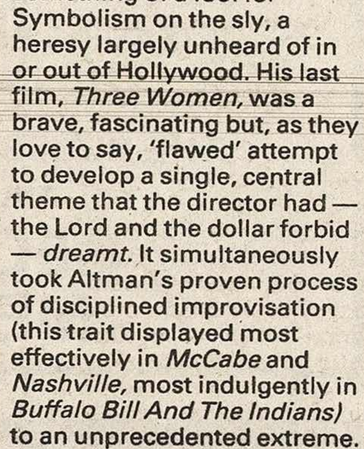
Something of an alien abroad or a stranger in a strange country, Altman can claim an innate, almost unique *(pace* Sam Peckinpah) ability to penetrate the massive motherlode of American mythology, popular, past and present, and somehow perpetuate same. His manner and mannerisms, though, are hardly 'accepted' or, to some, acceptable.

But perspective *is* perception. Both *The Long Goodbye,* an updating of Raymond Chandler into early '70s Los Angeles, and *McCabe and Mrs. Miller,* an elegantly elegiac tale of how 'The West' was not won, but lost, leap to light as two of Altman's most incisive attempts to tamper with the American cultural mainstream and meditatively, mysteriously alter its flow. New myths from old.

And Altman's also something of a fool for Symbolism on the sly, a heresy largely unheard of in or out of Hollywood. His last film, *Three Women,* was a brave, fascinating but, as they love to say, 'flawed' attempt to develop a single, central theme that the director had — the Lord and the dollar forbid — *dreamt.* It simultaneously took Altman's proven process of disciplined improvisation (this trait displayed most effectively in *McCabe* and *Nashville,* most indulgently in *Buffalo Bill And The Indians)* to an unprecedented extreme.

Unsurprisingly perhaps, *A Wedding* is rather more formal and normal. The French classical dramatists used to rule that all the action of their plays had to be contained within 24 hours, and the single day's timespan of Altman's latest would doubtless have Corneille and Racine agog with admiration.

But *A Wedding* is much more than a wry wrinkle at an easy target, the currently



Amy Stryker, the-er-blushing bride

crumbling (so statistics show) institution of marriage. Altman's disinterested camera eye drifts laconically, lackadaisically almost, from church to country house, shaping and sizing exteriors and interiors with superb sense and symmetry.

The bride's family are Protestant, Bible-belt and bashing Old Southern, the groom's Catholic, svelte and hirsute New Italo-American. And ne're the two entourages shall meet without incident and accident. The opportunities for savage social satire and convulsive comedy of manners are obvious, but Altman ranges his aim.

An aged, bumbling, fumbling bishop who has to be pushed and prompted through the church ceremony (ex-director John Cromwell), an unnervingly neurotic and lesbian wedding 'co-ordinator' (Geraldine Chaplin), a ludicrously officious chief of security walkie-talking his way through proceedings as if he's controlling a riot (John Considine), a droll and drunken family doctor (Howard Duff), a numbed nymphomaniac (Mia Farrow) — . . *A Wedding* is crammed with cameos and caricatures. All American life is here. Almost. And, as often as not, Altman's humour veers viciously towards a blacker shade of pale.

America today: ain't no culture like having none. And Robert Altman knows. It shows.

Angus MacKinnon

Dread Beat An' Blood

Produced and directed by Franco Rosso
(Rebel Movies)

Dread Beat An' Blood is not the film of the album of the volume of poems with which Linton Kwesi Johnson first announced his immense and unique talent a couple of years ago.

It is a concise and entertaining documentary — spiced with Johnson's verse and its strictly rockers backdrop — that homes in vividly on the everyday lives and experiences of the black London communities to which The Poet extricably binds his work.

For those experiences read police harassment, the throb of the sound system, the street market, the community centre and violence at the carnival . . . a range of subject matter that, as Johnson explains on the screen, cannot be documented via conventional poetry of the 'sterile' framework of the English language. (All his poems are written in black patois).

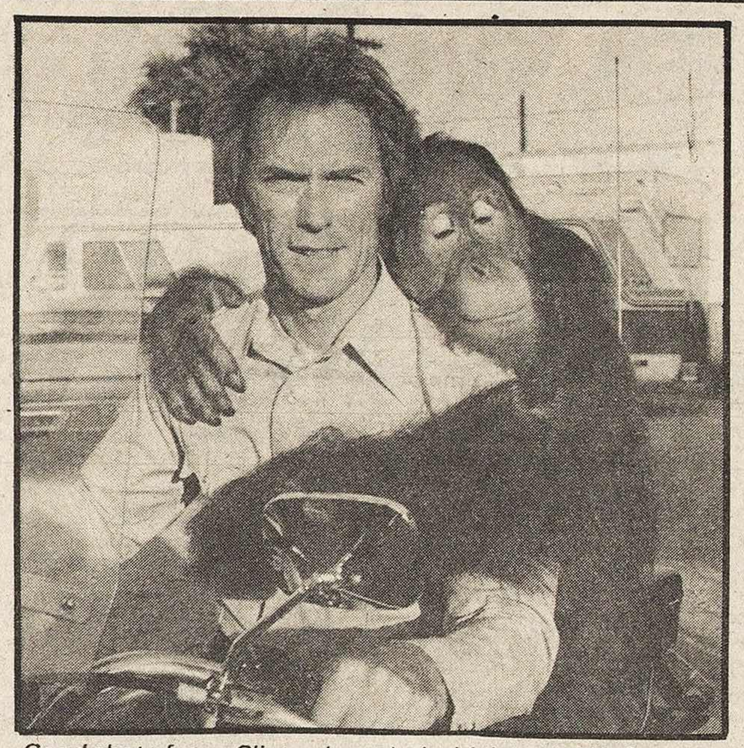
Also included is footage of Johnson addressing a march in Bradford in protest at the imprisonment of local man George Lindo.

As he himself says: "I don't think that poetry changes anything . . . it's people's actual material struggle that brings about political change."

A merciless realist.

Dread Beat An' Blood is showing on a double bill with *Roots Rock Reggae,* an absorbing JA-wise look at the same music that has already been shown twice on British television but is well worth another look — at London's Scala Cinema.

Adrian Thrills



Good shot of you, Clint — but who's driving the bike?

Every Which Way But Loose

Directed by James Fargo
Starring Clint Eastwood and Sondra Locke
(Warner Bros)

Do you know why they sell popcorn in cinemas? It's to go with the sort of corn that Clint Eastwood utilizes on the screen.

The Big Clint (left): "I'll get ya for this, caption writer."

Barring minor interruptions, it's possible to sit through one hour and 50 minutes of *Every Which Way But Loose* (not what he will turn you, rather how Sondra Locke turns him) before admitting it's the purest hokum, by which time it won't matter anyway.

Philo Beddoe is part two of the tough, self-willed but slightly gullible part Eastwood played in *The Gauntlet.* Philo is a trucker who lacks in wits what he makes up for with his fists at off-track pugilistic events, and likes to come home to country music, cold beers and a pet ape, pardon me, *orangutan.* An orangutan has the same number of ribs as us humans but, like children, you should never share a stage with one.

Seasoned veteran that he is however, Eastwood caters for the holiday season, lately upon us. Thrills spill as dumb cops, spunky grannies, and even dumber motorcycle gangs lead each other a merry chase after the big E, himself chasing after a wanton country singer called Lynn Halsey-Taylor. Lynn picked him up in a bar, saying "my boyfriend don't mind men coming back, so long as they don't try to drive his car", and Philo was caught in the tender trap.

A realistic love yarn in a romantic comedy romp.

It's no *Outlaw Josey Wales* of course, but then show me an Eastwood film that isn't enjoyable and I'll show you someone who probably thinks the only true popular movie star left in the '70s cinema of wonder is John Travolta.

Paul Rambali

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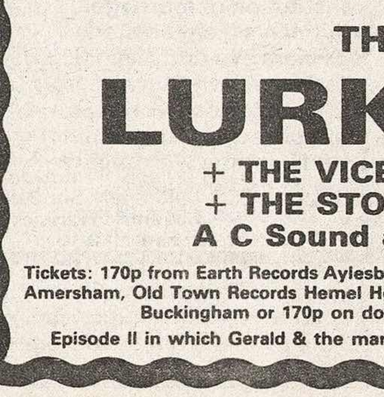
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON UNION, MALET ST, W.C.1
7.30 P.M, SATURDAY JANUARY 20TH
TICKETS £1.50 ON THE NIGHT OR IN ADVANCE FROM
SMALL WONDER, ROUGH TRADE AND HONKY TONK RECORD SHOPS

DINGWALLS

01-267 4967 Camden Lock, Chalk Farm Road, London NW1

THURS 18
SNIFF 'N' THE TEARS
SUN 21
STEAMING R&B NIGHT WITH
THE INMATES
plus
THE HOUSE BLUES BAND
THURS 25
GEORGE MELLY



You'll believe a band can fly.

Thursday 18 January
The Palace, Mountain Ash, Muskin, Wales
Friday 19 January
Horn of Plenty, St Albans
Wednesday 24 January
Windsor Castle, Harrow Road
Wednesday 31 January
Windsor Castle, Harrow Road

GOTHAM CITY SWING BAND

Play Romantic Places
BRUNEL UNIVERSITY, UXBRIDGE, SATURDAY JANUARY 20th
BARBARELLA'S BIRMINGHAM, SUNDAY JANUARY 21st

FRIARS

AT THE MAXWELL HALL
AYLESBURY
SATURDAY, JANUARY 20th at 7.30pm

THE
LURKERS
+ THE VICE CREEMS
+ THE STOWAWAYS
A C Sound and Vision

Tickets: 170p from Earth Records Aylesbury, Scorpion High Wycombe, Hairport Amersham, Old Town Records Hemel Hempstead, F.L. Moore Bletchley, Hi Vu Buckingham or 170p on door. Life membership 25p.
Episode II in which Gerald & the man media believers turn on the heat.

THE KINKS are back on the road, headlining their first full-scale British tour for more than three years — surprising, but true! You'll find them in action at Oxford (Thursday), Sheffield (Friday), Leicester (Saturday), Liverpool (Sunday), Newcastle (Monday), Edinburgh (Tuesday) and Glasgow (Wednesday). Chief Kink Ray Davies is, of course, in the spotlight below.

NAZARETH, now augmented to quintet size with the addition of ex-SAHB stalwart Zal Cleminson, begin their extensive U.K. tour at Preston (Friday), Glasgow (Saturday), Edinburgh (Sunday), Manchester (Monday) and Sheffield (Tuesday). Our picture shows one of the least publicised members of the band, the ever-present and always reliable Pete Agnew.

LINDA LEWIS is an artist always well worth seeing, and there's ample opportunity for Londoners to do so, because she opens a two-week season at Ronnie Scott's on Monday.

● Another of the week's highlights is the opening of a concert tour by ALAN PRICE, his first for more than a year. Opening performance is in Norwich on Sunday.

THE LURKERS return to live action, now that singer Howard Wall (below) has fully recovered from his bout of meningitis, fortunately with no after-effects. They're playing their delayed London gig at the Electric Ballroom this Sunday, with free flexi-discs for all the audience, and this is preceded by dates at Basingstoke (Friday) and Aylesbury (Saturday).

JIMMY CLIFF flies into London, with his regular backing band, for a one-off concert at the Hammersmith Odeon on Tuesday — as part of a whirlwind tour of Europe.

● The other major one-off event of the week is at the same venue on Saturday, when CHIC headline in the wake of their almost non-stop successes in the singles Top Thirty last year.

NATIONWIDE GIG GUIDE

Thursday

Basildon Double Six Club: **Rednite**
Birmingham Barbarella's: **Zaine Griff**
Birmingham Mercat Cross: **Ocean Boulevard**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Orphan**
Birmingham The Bell: **The Clerks**
Blackburn Bailey's: **Gerry & The Pacemakers (for three days)**
Bradford St. George's Hall: **UFO**
Brighton Alhambra: **Fan Club**
Brighton Hungry Years: **Nightrider**
Bristol Granary: **Eric Bell Band**
Burntwood Troubadour: **The Amazing Dark Horse**
Congleton Duke of Wellington: **The Shattered Dolls**
Halesowen Tiffany's: **Gaffa**
Hatfield Polytechnic: **The Drill**
High Wycombe Nags Head: **64 Spoons**
Liverpool Eric's: **Belt & Braces Band**
London Camden Brecknock: **Scarecrow**
London Camden Dingwalls: **Sniff 'n' The Tears**
London Fulham Golden Lion: **Rule The Roost**
London Hammersmith The Rutland: **Fred Rickshaw's Hot Goolies**
London Harrow Rd., Windsor Castle: **John Grimaldi's Cheap Flights**
London Islington Hope & Anchor: **China Street**
London Kennington The Cricketers: **Manyana**
London Kensington The Nashville: **Punishment Of Luxury**
London Kensington De Villiers Bar: **Gold Dust Twins**
London Marquee Club: **Jab-Jab**
London Maunkberry's Club: **Lizzie**
London Old Kent Rd. Thomas A'Beckett: **Tour De Force**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Pete Allen Band**
London Southgate Royalty Ballroom: **The Flying Saucers**
London Tottenham The Spurs: **Agenda**
London University College: **Hi-Fi**
London W.10 Acklam Hall: **Shocking Stockings**
London Woolwich Tramshed: **Georgie Fame & The Blue Flames**
Middlesbrough Teesside Polytechnic: **Panties**
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: **The Hormones**
Nottingham Imperial Hotel: **Lap Region**
Oxford Polytechnic: **The Kinks/Stadium Dogs**
Poynton Fok Centre: **Bullock Smithy**
Reading Target Club: **El Seven**
Rotherham Dickens Inn: **The Bombers**
Sheffield City Hall: **Elvis Costello & The Attractions/Richard Hell & The Voidoids/John Cooper Clarke**
Stafford North Staffs Polytechnic: **After The Fire**
St. Albans City Hall: **Matchbox**
Stockport Warren Buckley Jazz Cellar: **Crazy Cavan 'N' The Rhythm Rockers**
Swansea Circles Club: **Pursey's Package with The Angelic Upstarts/The Invaders**
York Revolution Club: **Cheap Flights**

Friday

Ayr Darlington Hotel: **Fever Pitch**
Basingstoke Technical College: **The Lurkers**
Bath Academy of Art: **The Cruisers**
Birmingham Barbarella's: **Punishment Of Luxury**
Birmingham Barrel Organ: **Bright Eyes**
Birmingham Elizabethan Days: **Bad Earth**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Spitfire**
Bournemouth Dorset Institute of Further Education: **Thieves Like Us**
Bradford Queens Hall: **Snoots**
Bradford University: **Pursey's Package with The Angelic Upstarts/The Invaders**
Brighton Buccaneer: **En Route**
Burton 76 Club: **After The Fire**
Cambridge The Alma: **Harem Scarem**
Canterbury Christchurch College: **The Drill**
Chelmsford City Tavern: **Matchbox**
Chester Arts Centre: **The Jags**
Dudley J.B.'s Club: **Zaine Griff**
Dundee Technical College: **Panties**
Fife St. Andrew's University: **Crazy Cavan 'n' The Rhythm Rockers**
Glasgow Art College: **The Scottish Monos**
Guilford Surrey University: **Merger**
Hanley Victoria Hall: **Elvis Costello & The Attractions/Richard Hell & The Voidoids/John Cooper Clarke**
Hull College of Higher Education: **Hot Water**
Hull Phoenix Club: **Red Eye**
Kettering Windmill Club: **The Bearshank Band**
Kirklevington Country Club: **Gary Boyle Band**
Knaresborough Folk Club: **Roaring Jelly**
Lancaster University: **UFO**
Leeds Fforde Green Hotel: **Landscape**
Liverpool Earlstown Town Hall: **Belt & Braces Band**
Liverpool Eric's: **Eric Bell Band**
London Acton Kings Head: **Paz**
London Camden Brecknock: **Sucker**
London Camden Dingwalls: **Straight 8/Split Rivitt**
London Camden Southampton Arms: **Jellyroll Blues Band**
London East Ham Ruskin Arms: **Dog Watch**
London Fulham Golden Lion: **Carol Grimes Band**
London Fulham Greyhound: **Jenny Darren Band**
London Harrow Road Windsor Castle: **Warm Jets**
London Islington Hope & Anchor: **Lew Lewis Band**
London Kensington The Nashville: **Gary Holton's Gems**
London Marquee Club: **Dave Lewis Band**
London North Polytechnic: **Revelation**
London Notting Hill Old Swan: **Shake Before Use**
London Oxford St. 100 Club: **Jabula**
London Putney Star & Garter: **Greig & Nigel's Folk and Blues Night**
London S.E.1 The Wellington: **Kestral**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Danny Moss Quartet**
London Southgate Royalty Ballroom: **Chris Hill**
London St. George's Medical School: **Hazzard**
London University College Union: **Swift**
London West Hampstead Moonlight Club: **Red Alert/Action Replay/The Zeroes**
London Whitelands College: **Simon Townshend Band**
Middlesbrough Teesside Polytechnic: **John Grimaldi's Cheap Flights**
Newcastle Bridge Hotel: **Hot Snax**
Nottingham Club Malibu: **Pressure Shocks**
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: **Last Call**
Nottingham Sandpiper: **Screeens**
Paisley Technical College: **Chou Pahrot**
Poole Wessex Hall: **George Melly & The Feetwarmers**
Preston Guildhall: **Nazareth**
Retford Porterhouse: **Streetband**
Scarborough Penthouse: **China Street**
Seaford Third World: **Girlschool**
Sheffield University: **The Kinks/Stadium Dogs**
York Revolution Club: **Raped**
York Winning Post: **Tragician**

Saturday

Abertillery Six Bells: **The Jags**
Aylesbury Friars: **The Lurkers**
Basildon Double Six: **Dog Watch**
Birmingham Barbarella's: **Eric Bell Band**
Birmingham Bogarts: **Killer**
Birmingham (Kings Heath) Hare & Hounds: **Brownsville Banned**
Birmingham Mercat Cross: **Special Clinic**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **School Sports**
Bristol Crown Cellar Bar: **The Wild Beasts**
Cannock Troubadour: **The Kidda Band**
Chiddingly Six Bells: **The Dials**
Coventry Warwick University: **After The Fire**
Croydon Red Deer: **Tour De Force**
Doncaster Askern Spa: **The Bombers**
Dundee Barracuda Club: **Fever Pitch**
Edinburgh University: **The Scottish Monos**
Farnborough Technical College: **Harem Scarem**
Glasgow Apollo Centre: **Nazareth**
Gosport John Peel: **Nightrider**
Grantham Guildhall: **The Cruisers**
Halifax Good Mood Club: **Hot Water**
Hamilton Accies Club: **The Motels**
Ilford The Cranbrook: **Raised On Robbery**
Leeds Haddon Hall: **Agony Column**
Leeds University: **Elvis Costello & The Attractions / Richard Hell & The Voidoids / John Cooper Clarke**
Leicester Polytechnic: **The Kinks / Stadium Dogs**
Lincoln RAF Swinderby: **Strange Days**
Liverpool Catholic Chaplaincy: **Belt & Braces Band**
Liverpool C.F. Mott College: **Gaffa**
London Camden Brecknock: **The Vipers**
London Camden Music Machine: **Merger**
London Chelsea The Wheatsheaf: **The VI.P.'s**
London Chiswick John Bull: **Sneakers**
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: **Gary Holton's Gems**
London Fulham Golden Lion: **Pumphouse Gang**
London Fulham Greyhound: **Jenny Darren Band**
London Hammersmith Odeon: **Chic**
London Hammersmith Swan: **Straight 8**
London New Barnet Duke of Lancaster: **Sucker**
London N.4 The Stapleton: **The Electrotunes**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Keith Smith**
London Southgate Royalty Ballroom: **Froggy Roadshow**
London University Union: **Gloria Mundi**
London West Hampstead Moonlight Club: **Nancy Kramer / Shy**
Manchester Mayflower Club: **Crazy Cavan 'N' The Rhythm Rockers**
Middlesbrough Rock Garden: **John Grimaldi's Cheap Flights**
Newport I.o.W Community Theatre: **George Melly & The Feetwarmers**
Nottingham Boat Club: **Remus Down Boulevard**
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: **Outward Band**
Nuneaton 77 Club: **Freebird**
Oxford Corn Dolly: **Warm Jets**
Poole Brewers Arms: **Tours**
Preston The Wharehouse: **The Accelerators**
Reading Bulmershe College: **Zaine Griff**
Reading Target Club: **Double Xposure**
Sheffield Limit Club: **Landscape**
Sheffield University: **Pursey's Package with The Angelic Upstarts / The Invaders**
St. Albans City Hall: **Nicky Horne/The John DeSade Reverberation Roadshow.**
Stanwick Working Mens Club: **Longshot**
Watford Wall Hall College: **Streetband**
Welwyn Garden City Mid-Herts College: **The Soft Boys / The Astronauts**
Wishaw Crown Hotel (lunchtime): **The Pests**
York Revolution Club: **Tribesman**
York University: **UFO**

Sunday

Accrington Lakeland Lounge: **Witchfynde**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Prima Donna**
Bishops Stortford Old Maltings: **Tracks (lunchtime) / Swing Street (evening)**
Brighton Alhambra: **The Piranhas**
Bromley The Northover: **Bill Scott & Ian Ellis**
Coventry Theatre: **Elvis Costello & The Attractions / Richard Hell & The Voidoids / John Cooper Clarke**
Derby Olde Bell Hotel: **Strange Days**
Dumfries Stagecoach: **Panties**
Edinburgh Usher Hall: **Nazareth**
Leeds Fforde Green Hotel: **Eric Ball Band**
Liverpool Empire Theatre: **The Kinks / Stadium Dogs**
London Battersea Nags Head: **Jugular Vein**
London Camden Brecknock: **Jam Night**
London Camden Electric Ballroom: **The Lurkers / Adam & The Ants / The Edge**
London Canning Town Bridge House: **Remus Down Boulevard**
London East Ham Ruskin Arms: **Dog Watch**
London Finchley Torrington: **The Casual Band**
London Harrow Road Windsor Castle: **The Secret Seven**
London Islington Hope & Anchor: **The Troggs**
London Kensington The Nashville: Zaine Griff
London Marquee Club: **The Young Bucks / Portraits**
London Paddington Western Counties: **Rednite**
London Peckham Montpelier (lunchtime): **Blue Moon**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Lennie Felix**
London Woolwich Tramshed: **Bob Williamson**
Macclesfield Bear's Head: **The Accelerators**
Manchester City Festival: **Crazy Cavan 'N' The Rhythm Rockers**
Martletwy Cross Hands: **The Kidda Band**
Merthyr Tydfil Gurnos Club: **Dave Berry & The Cruisers**
Newquay Central Hotel: **The Winners**
Norwich Theatre Royal: **Alan Price**
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: **Art Failure**
Oxford New Theatre: **UFO**
Poynton Folk Centre: **Nigel Mazlyn Jones / Titanic**
Uxbridge Brunel University: **Streetband**
Walsall Dirty Duck (lunchtime): **The Amazing Dark Horse**

Monday

Birmingham Barrel Organ: **Freebird**
Birmingham Mercat Cross: **Orphan**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Video**
Brentwood Hermit Club: **Remus Down Boulevard**
Cardiff New Tito's: **Dave Berry & The Cruisers (for a week)**
Chester Smartyz: **The Drill**
Farnborough Tumbledown Dick: **Nightrider**
Ilford Cauliflower Hotel: **Original East Side Stompers**
Leicester De Montfort Hall: **Elvis Costello & The Attractions/Richard Hell & The Voidoids/John Cooper Clarke**
Liverpool The Crown: **The Clerks**
London Camden Brecknock: **Tennis Shoes**
London Canning Town Bridge House: **Warm Jets**
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: **The Jags/Sneakers**
London Fulham Golden Lion: **Skin Deep**
London Paddington Western Counties: **Kestral**
London Putney Half Moon: **Jeremy Taylor**
London Putney Star & Garter: **Penny Royal**
London Ronnie Scott's Club: **Linda Lewis (for two weeks)**
London West Hampstead Moonlight club: **Zzitz/The Carpettes**
Manchester Apollo Theatre: **Nazareth**
Newcastle City Hall: **The Kinks/Stadium Dogs**
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: **The Party**
Nottingham Imperial Hotel: **Gwaihir**
Oxford Polytechnic: **After The Fire**
Petersfield White Horse: **Thieves Like Us**

Tuesday

Birmingham Aston University: **Art Failure**
Birmingham Barrel Organ: **Fashion**
Birmingham Fighting Cocks: **Brujo**
Birmingham Mercat Cross: **Cartoons**
Birmingham Odeon: **UFO**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Speed Limit**
Bishops Stortford Triad Centre: **Red Express**
Doncaster Institute of Higher Education: **Hot Water**
Edinburgh Odeon: **The Kinks/Stadium Dogs**
London Camden Brecknock: **Portraits**
London Camden Music Machine: **The Heptones**
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: **Split Rivitt**
London Fulham Golden Lion: **Night Shift**
London Hammersmith Odeon: **Jimmy Cliff**
London Hammersmith Riverside Studios: **Snips & The Video Kings**
London Maunkberry's Club: **Tim Thomas**
London Sheen The Derby Arms: **Freddy's Feetwarmers**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Alan Elsdon-/Johnny Barnes Quartet**
London Stoke Newington Pegasus: **Tennis Shoes**
London Upstairs at Ronnie Scott's: **Private**
London West Hampstead Moonlight Club: **The Stops/The Pretenders**
Nottingham Imperial Hotel: **Gaffa**
Oldham Civic Hall: **Elvis Costello & The Attractions/Richard Hell & The Voidoids/John Cooper Clarke**
Sheffield City Hall: **Nazareth**
Sheffield Limit Club: **John Grimaldi's Cheap Flights**
Sheffield Totley Hall: **The Salford Jets**
Walsall Dirty Duck: **The Amazing Dark Horse**

Wednesday

Aberystwyth University: **Gillan**
Birmingham Barrel Organ: **Brujo**
Birmingham Bogarts: **Girlschool**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Rainmaker**
Birmingham (Yardley) Bulls Head: **Roses**
Bradford University: **Agony Column**
Cardiff Colchester Avenue College: **Sassafras**
Cheltenham Plough Inn: **Roadsters**
Derby Bell Hotel: **Forwards**
Glasgow Apollo Centre: **The Kinks/Stadium Dogs**
Greenock Victorian Carriage: **The Motels**
Hatfield Polytechnic: **Sucker**
Leeds Royal Park Hotel: **Tragician**
London , Camden Brecknock: **Tour De Force**
London Camden Dublin Castle: **Out To Lunch**
London Camden Music Machine: **Landscape/Rednite**
London Canning Town Bridge House: **Ex-Directory**
London Chadwell Heath Greyhound: **Dog Watch**
London Hammersmith Riverside Studios: **The Casual Band**
London Islington Hope & Anchor: **Pressure Shocks**
London Maunkberry's Club: **Dana Gillespie**
London N4 The Stapleton: **Kestral**
London Peckham Montpelier: **Blue Moon**
London Putney Star & Garter: **Dana Simmonds & Greig's Folk and Blues Showcase**
London Shepherds Bush Trafalgar: **Gino & The Sharks**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Eddie Thompson Quartet.**
London Stoke Newington Pegasus: **The Crooks**
London Tooting The Castle: **Zilch**
London Upstairs at Ronnie Scott's: **Hazzard**
London Victoria The Venue: **Eddie Money**
London West Hampstead Moonlight Club: **Local Operator/Central Logic**
London Wimbledon F.C. Nelson's Club: **Night Shift**
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: **Gwaihir**
Nottingham Imperial Hotel: **Some Chicken**
Sheffield City Hall: **UFO**
Sheffield Students Union: **Car Crash**
Solihull Cresta Club: **Gerry & The Pacemakers (for four days)**
Solihull Golden Lion: **Special Clinic**
South Woodford Railway Bell: **Original East Side Stompers**
Staindrop Black Swan: **Pete Bond**
York Pop Club: **Adam & The Ants**

BRIAN B's LIVE PAGE

PHONE 01-261 6153

THE PORTERHOUSE
20 Carolgate, Retford, Notts. Tel. 704981

Friday January 19th
STREETBAND

Saturday January 20th
AFTER THE FIRE
+ GIRLS SCHOOL

FAIRFIELD HALL CROYDON
OUTLAW CONCERTS PRESENT

OSIBISA

Sunday 11th February
7.30p.m.
Tickets £3.00, £2.50, £2.25, £2.00, £1.75
From box office & usual agents

STRAIGHT MUSIC PRESENTS
THE LURKERS
WITH GUESTS
ADAM AND THE ANTS
THE EDGE
ELECTRIC BALLROOM
184 CAMDEN HIGH ST. N.W.1.
SUNDAY 21st JANUARY at 7·30
TICKETS £2·00 (INC. VAT) IN ADVANCE ELECTRIC BALLROOM BOX OFFICE. TEL. 485 9006
LONDON THEATRE BOOKINGS, SHAFTESBURY AVE., 439 3371. PREMIER BOX OFFICE. TEL. 240 2245.
EDWARDS & EDWARDS, TEL. 734 9761 OR ON NIGHT

THE BRIDGE HOUSE
23 BARKING ROAD, CANNING TOWN, E16

Thursday January 18th 30p — SPLIT RIVITT	Monday January 22nd 30p — WARM JETS
Friday January 19th 40p — JAPANESE TOY	Tuesday January 23rd — KANGAROO ALLEY
Saturday January 20th 50p — CHAS & DAVE	Wednesday January 24th — EX-DIRECTORY
Sunday January 21st 40p — REMUS DOWN BOULEVARD	Thursday January 25th 30p — ANGELO PALLADINO

Zaine Griff
WOULD LIKE TO WISH EVERYONE A HAPPY 1979 AND LOOKS FORWARD TO SEEING YOU AT

JANUARY
Monday 15th CIVIC THEATRE, MANSFIELD
Tuesday 16th SMARTIES, CHESTER
Thursday 18th BARBARELLAS, BIRMINGHAM
Friday 19th JB's CLUB, DUDLEY
Saturday 20th BULMERSHE COLLEGE, READING
Sunday 21st THE NASHVILLE
Thursday 25th THIRD WORLD, SEAFORD
Firday 26th 76 CLUB BURTON ON TRENT
Saturday 27th ROCK GARDEN, MIDDLESBROUGH
Tuesday 30th MARQUEE

FEBRUARY
Saturday 3rd SLOUGH COLLEGE, SLOUGH, BUCKS
Saturday 10th NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE COLLEGE, HITCHIN
Monday 12th GREYHOUND, CHADWELL HEATH
Wednesday 14th DINGWALLS
Saturday 17th NORBECK CASTLE HOTEL
Friday 23rd THE BOOGIE HOUSE, NORWICH
Saturday 24th THAMES POLY WOOLWICH SE18
Wednesday 28th THE PALACE, GLAMORGAN

MARCH
Thursday 1st MARQUEE
Monday 5th HERMIT CLUB, BRENTWOOD
Thursday 8th LIMIT CLUB, RETFORD

BRON AGENCY,
100 CHALK FARM ROAD, LONDON NW1. 01-267 4499

Words (Barry Clarke) words words words words words words
CITY HALL ST. ALBANS
Saturday January 20th
Capital Radio's very own
LITTLE NICKY HORNE
+ JOHN DeSADE REVERBERATION ROADSHOW
BAR Food
All tickets £1.50 from Box Office, 37 Chequer Street, St. Albans, tel. 64511 or on door. Cheques and P.O'S made payable to St. Albans District Council.
Feb. 2/3 THE KINKS + Stadium Dogs
Words, words words words words words words words words

DEREK BLOCK – MARSHALL ARTS PRESENTS
ROY AYERS
+ GUESTS
CENTRAL LINE
APPOLLO THEATRE, MANCHESTER
FRIDAY 2nd FEBRUARY at 7.30
TICKETS £3.00, £2.50, £1.50 (inc VAT) IN ADVANCE
THEATRE BOX OFFICE (061) 273 1112 USUAL AGENT OR ON NIGHT.

HAMMERSMITH ODEON
QUEEN CAROLINE STREET, W6
SUNDAY 4th FEBRUARY at 7.30
TICKETS £3.50, £3.00, £2.50, £2.00 (inc VAT) IN ADVANCE.
THEATRE BOX OFFICE (01) 748 4081.
LONDON THEATRE BOOKINGS, SHAFTESBURY AVE. (01) 439 3371
PREMIER BOX OFFICE (01) 240 2245, USUAL AGENT OR ON NIGHT.

LANDSCAPE

Leeds, Fforde Green Hotel 19
Sheffield, Limit Club 20
London, Music Machine 24
Camberwell School of Art 26
Basingstoke Central Studio 27 Jan.

HERMIT CLUB
SHENFIELD ROAD, BRENTWOOD
Monday January 22nd
DEAD RINGER
(7 Piece Band, ex-Rumours Horn section)
With special guests
KNUCKLES
Next Monday : CAROLINE ROADSHOW

JOCK McDONALD *PRESENTS*
THE LOUS
(From France)
STILLETTO
CUDDLY TOYS
(formerly Raped)
GREY
At the Acklam Hall, Portobello Road, (under flyover)
Tuesday January 23rd, 7pm. — 12 midnight.

MID-HERTS COLLEGE
The Campus, Welwyn Garden City
Saturday January 20th, 8pm
THE SOFT BOYS
+ THE ASTRONAUTS
Bar Disco

Friday January 19th
BURN
+ GARY AGG
Friday January 26th
THE ELITE
+ THE ARROGANT
Unit One, Whilehall Rd., Uxbridge. Tel. 31192

THE Venue
160 VICTORIA ST, SW1
(opp Victoria Tube station)
01-834 5500

Fri Jan 19th & Sat Jan 20th £3
TERRY REID & FRIENDS
One Show 9pm

Wed Jan 31st £3
IAN MATHEWS
Two Shows 8.30pm & 12 midnight

Thurs Feb 1st £3
WALTER EGAN
One show 9pm

Only British appearances
Fri Feb 2nd Sat Feb 3rd
ANGELO BRANDUARDI
One Show Each night 9pm

Sat Feb 10th £3
CITY BOY
Two shows 8.30pm & 12 midnight

Only British appearance by former members of THE BYRDS, McGUINN, CLARK & HILLMAN.
£4
Thurs Feb 15th, Fri Feb 16th, Sat Feb 17th
Two shows each night 8.30pm & 12 midnight

Doors open at 7pm & 11pm.

CUDDLY TOYS
(formerly Raped)
Friday January 19th
York, Revolution Club
Tuesday January 23rd
Portobello Road, Acklam Hall

DOG WATCH

Friday January 19th & Sunday January 21st
EAST HAM
Ruskin Arms
Saturday January 20th
BASILDON
Double Six
Tuesday January 23rd
NEW BARNET
Duke of Lancaster
Wednesday January 24th
CHADWELL HEATH
Greyhound

Band Enquiries: 01-690 1823/01-858 6875

"You're naming your faceless children, and teaching them your ways . . ."

ESSEX S.U. ENTS PRESENT
THE
IAN GILLAN BAND
+ Support
SATURDAY JANUARY 20th
in the S.U. Dance Hall
at 8.30 p.m.
Tickets £1.50 from S.U. & Parrot Records
Enquiries: Colchester 863211

THE EXIT ARE AT
ROCK GARDEN JANUARY 18th on stage 11 o'clock
ELECTRIC BALLROOM January 21st on stage 8 o'clock
NASHVILLE January 27th on stage 10.30 pm

RECORDWORLD & SOUTHEND TECH. S.U.
present
at the Southend College of Technology
WRECKLESS ERIC
+ Support, Disco & Bar
FRIDAY JANUARY 26th
Tickets £2.00 Doors open 7.30 pm
Enquiries: Southend 353931

Last Time This Winter
REDS
+ Support
at the
Windsor Castle,
Harrow Road
Thursday January 18th
Admission 50p

THAMES POLYTECHNIC
Calderwood Street, S.E.1
Saturday January 20th
LIGHTNING RAIDERS
Licensed Bar — Non Students Welcome

LIVE PAGE LIVE PAGE LIVE PAGE
FOR DETAILS OF ADVERTISING YOUR GIGS, ETC., ON THIS WONDERFUL SECTION RING THE MOST WONDERFUL BRIAN B
ON 01-261 6153

ON THE TOWN

He laughed in the face of Texaco

Pic: ROB HALL

Rory Gallagher

Hammersmith Odeon

Roaring for Rory, Gallagher's fans are filling this building like men with a purpose; dour, no-nonsense men, they take their boogie seriously.

Wisely, the bar's been stripped of fancy inessentials presenting, instead, a solitary massive bank of Newcastle Brown. I pass the time counting lumberjack shirts.

And yes, the invisible guitars are in evidence too (battered Strats, natch. Fascinated, I watch the preparations: an elaborate mime of carrying, unfastening and opening cases; straps over heads, tuning phantom strings. Rory's on the road again, completing another of the gruelling itineraries which have marked his career for a decade or more. Let other musos wax tragic on the horrors of tour-life; Gallagher takes to the road like striped white lines.

Though additions of keyboards and even brass had been foreseen, this time round the quiet Irish axe-man has chopped his line-up back to the classic HM three-piece, with Gallagher stalwart Gerry McAvoy on bass and ex-SAHB drummer Ted McKenna.

Last year was, according to the programme, one of "drastic change" for Rory, but any transformation must be too subtle for me to see. The formula looks unchanged — a model of continuity, reassuring familiarity — and exactly what the crowd have come to hear.

So the Cork boy floats serenely on; a guitarist of awesome facility and a fair singer as well. But an uninteresting songwriter.

Like most white bluesmen, he might be said to preserve the form of the genre, and religiously so, but never its content. Thus the songs are dispensible litanies of the mythical ramblin' cowboy love-'em-and-leave-'em type, washed across the brain with mighty power-chords and meaning precisely nothing to anyone. Of course, blue men *can* sing the whites; it's just that, generally, they don't.

"Shin-Kicker" opens, Rory bounding on to an explosion of acclaim. With his irrepressible grin, he's the very picture of a man who's happy in his work. "THANGYEW!! Nice to be here! Gonna do a song called 'Do You Read Me'. Hope you like it!"

They do.

Blue-jeaned, check-shirted, friendly and self-effacing (if being natural really is 'the biggest pose of all then it follows that Gallagher must be rock's biggest poseur), he's only galvanized by the music itself. Playing it loud and proud he struts, grimaces, all the usual stuff.

Fine, but I can draw no more from it than mild nostalgia and find my attention wandering. That said, Gallagher fans know their man and I've sense enough to know the sublime irrelevance of *any* criticisms.

The set benefits immensely from the inclusion of Gallagher's usual solos; an acoustic thing on "Jesse James" and a steel-slide blues. It's a perfect showcase for the guy's technique and a welcome break from the rather impersonal material which surrounds it.

At the very least, Rory Gallagher's performances are ritual celebrations and blessedly free of all the dumb and vicious fantasy-peddling that disfigures latterday hard-rock in general. What you expect is what you get, and he neither degrades his fans nor disappoints them.

Paul Du Noyer

If Beefheart played washboard for Sham 69

The Mekons

Hope and Anchor

The atmosphere and music of The Mekons' scouring, abandoned contribution to the Hope and Anchor's current series of last year's regulars recalls hours of absorption and delight spent at Manchester's Ranch, Circus and Squat in '75 and 77.

Without immediately resembling the groups, they capture the ecstacy and exquisite guitar foaming of Devoto Buzzcocks; the skinned sensitivity and impetuous alertness of early Fall; and the impulsive naivety and fiery frenzy of Joy Division. Their effect and penetration is of a kindred spirit to the volatile, vital days of the peak of those groups, infused with individualism, effervescence and drama.

They play a hectic, happy and heady set.

The mobile Mekons make music with sharp edges and gaps that boisterously and erratically rubs and whirls, twists and startles. Raving, restless music, that explodes and unsteadies (two guitars scratch coarse, crude chords), that jumps and starts (a witty, frantic rhythm section) that grips and forces.

There are six excited, smiling performers who play for the hell of it, blatantly poking cheeky fun at the side effects that are justification and motivation.

Why do they do it? Why not.

Two guitarists, bassist, drummer and two singers cram on stage, deliriously chanting and hitting, fitfully hopping and bouncing to shamelessly complement the fidgety, feverish music. They look the way they sound: excitable and ebullient. It's an excitability that attracts and amuses, but The Mekons are far from frivolous.

They have achieved the fine, fascinating balance between simply emptily entertaining and strongly stimulating; between pampering and proposing. Without imposing, they are inspiring, intriguing and intelligent.

Mekon music is urgent and unfussy; dance to it, think about it.

Imagine a Sham 69 heavily influenced by Beefheart. It's three minute rock that doesn't hypocritically rely on rounded, coherent structures, strive for vague harmony and sensationalism or contrived climaxes. Instead it bursts and bumps, staggers through continual peaks and realistically inverts and shakes conventional existing sounds.

The patterns in The Mekons' idiosyncratic, even ridiculous song are unusual but not awkward; and these intoxicating songs suggest as well as seduce.

Their music is almost a stirring chaos, a kind of incomplete music that can stray and occasionally collapse into a shambles, but is hard and noisy enough to last and impress. And it will sound good on records because of its shapely sharpness. Musical maturity should not disrupt its essential spontaneity.

There's also a sweet lack of suffocating seriousness about The Mekons' challenging alternatives that is surprisingly healthy. They are natural and aggressively appealingly open minded.

Everything about them — their irregularity, independence, incisiveness — implies a continuing development of change and resistance. It's music that will never calm down or become stringently selective. Rock that will regenerate!

This is a memorable Mekons' performance; one that will be on my mind's legendary list alongside Buzzcocks, Banshees, Fall, Slits, Penetration and the Pistols, slanted with that thick edge of enthusiasm and speculation that suggests The Mekons will not easily slip. Records and larger halls are experiences they have yet to accommodate in depth, but they'll control and overcome. Either way, they're going to please a lot of people.

The Mekons mock and run amok, they're invigorating and irresistible. I love them.

Paul Morley

The Feelies

New York

The Feelies prove that the pose and style of established fore-runners can be combined with the time-honoured traditions of what's called 'underground rock' to produce a fresh, new approach.

Their look of studied normalcy is taken from Talking Heads. Their guitar showmanship takes off from where Television's sets used to end: Lloyd would strum double-time as Verlaine manically searched for the Lost Chord.

The Feelies begin their set with that same intensity, and build on it so that their guitars send off waves of pure electricity. It's not atonal white noise, but a field of monotonous yet exciting rhythms forcefully played.

At Hurrah's The Feelies show their galvanizing power by drawing the entire crowd (including the liggers usually draped over the bar) to the front of the stage; a feat I've never before seen there.

Wearing baggy pants and checked shirts, they look like unpopular high school 'nurds'. But they're neither misfits nor outcasts, and social pressures didn't drive them into rock 'n' roll. Yet in the angular faces and harsh stares of singer / guitarists Glen Mercer and Bill Million, there's a suggestion of tension and conflict that impels them to create aggressive, decidedly unsweet, unharmonious music.

Their act, however, doesn't provide a cathartic release. As it progresses and the playing gets louder and wilder, Mercer and Million's nervousness seems only to increase. And their stage antics, dementedly jumping up and down like a Yardbirds' rave-up, veer close to self-parody.

The Feelies' sound is relentless and monolithic, with more drive than melody; but it's also startlingly textured. Pulses of rhythm unexpectedly burst from the guitars, bass and drums; there are no guitar heroics, blues-based riffs or real solos.

At present their vocals are undeveloped and obscured by the band's locomotive onrush of sound; so it's hard to say much about their singing or lyrical content. Most of the songs have choruses that, if not containing any hooks, are at least memorable. Numbers include "Fa Ce La", "Moscow Nights, "Original Love" and a slam-bang version of The MC5's "Looking At You".

The Feelies rarely gig, but already there's a strong 'buzz' about them. If they ever get to make a record, it could be as conceptually pure and jarring as the first Ramones album, although it may lack the same sense of humour.

I only hope a disc can be recorded and mixed hot enough to capture the power of their overcharged guitar frenzy.

Richard Grabel

The Drill

Rock Garden

The name is late '70s drab and functional; the red military jackets are a Sgt Pepper throwback. The point is obscure and the music fails to clarify.

Names like Constantina and Bienvenu suggest the exotic, but The Drill are penny-plain: their first single's called "Let's Rock" for God's sake. A smugly opportunist test-tube baby number new Small Faces' old chestnut, "Whatcha Gonna Do 'Bout It", with new words.

Singer Will Wilson, a flop-haired Lance Percival, combines theatrical pretensions with gauche Rod Stewart twitching and total lack of the requisite flair. He sings OK, but the material lacks colour.

The Drill are harmless enough, but if keyboard cleverdickery plus a modicum of raunch are up you alley, try After The Fire or City Boy.

Anyway, the Rock Garden have some new old music papers on the wall, so I enjoyed myself.

Harry George

The Cure

Hope and Anchor

This was a cruel date on The Cure's calendar.

Guitarist Robert Smith had flu and Lol Tolhurst's drumkit kept falling over. The Hope's basement displayed the charm of a cross-Channel lorry deck, and the PA vied with the gas heater in the inadequate stakes.

Ostensibly, The Cure had little going for them; yet they salvaged this unluxurious event from oblivion, largely through their own embryonic musical talent and their ability to inject a dose of enjoy-serum into the Mivvied corpuscles of punters present.

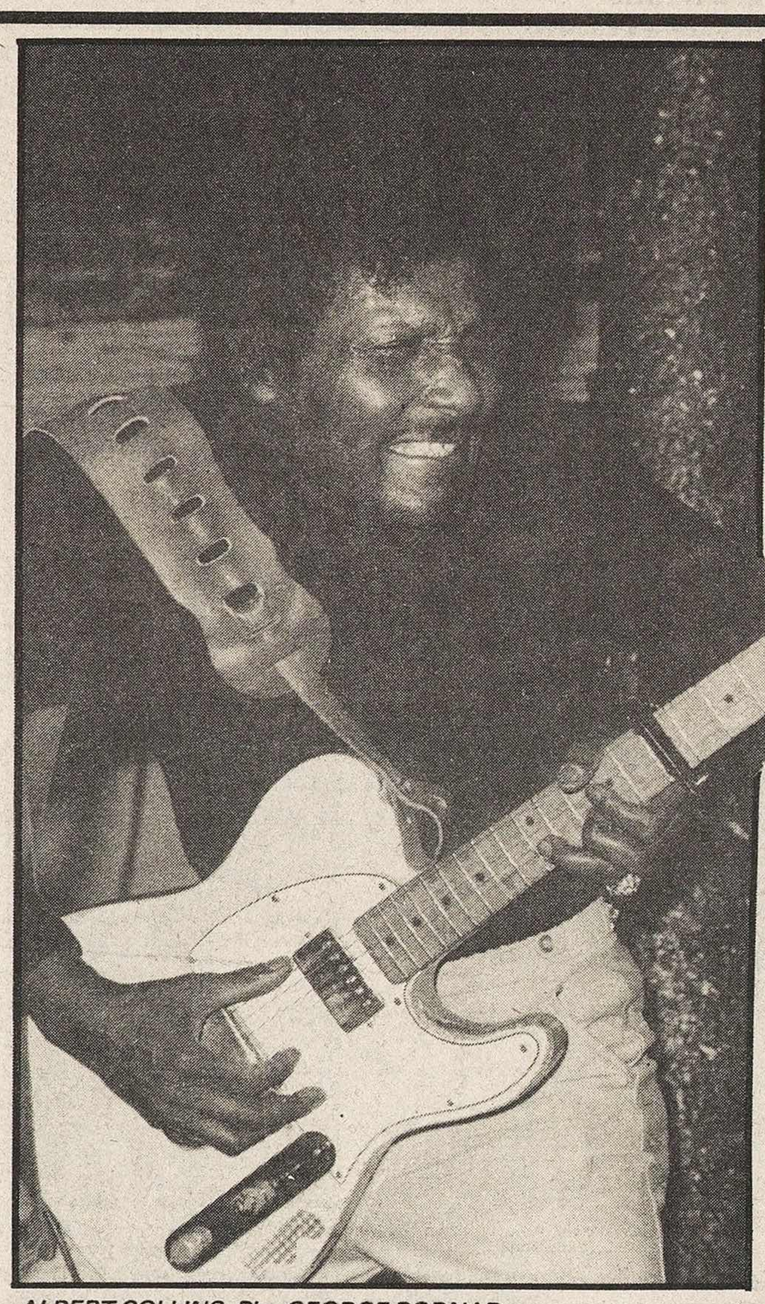
Despite their charity-rack instruments, the band played a crisp set. Their sound was compact and effervescent. Each song was a two-minute cameo of ferrous punkrock. Their *coup-de-gig* was the Camus inspired ditty "Killing An Arab": a zany crossbreed of 4/4 thrash and Moorish bazoukie fever.

The Cure's novel approach to rock is emphasised by bassman Michael Dempsey's skilfully versatile handling of lead and melody lines played over a rhythmic drum / guitar backdrop. Intriguing, but it tended to make things top-heavy. Such is the nature of three-piecedom: streamlined impact is often gained at the expense of amplitude. The Cure are competent enough to add a fourth hand to the crew without sacrificing the excitement and originality of their live performance.

A youthful nervousness, dotted with moments of controlled deadpan enhanced their stage presence; they played with sufficient enthusiasm to overcome the Spartan test-tube conditions of this chilly niterie.

Hollering for two encores, the crowd risked frostbite to clap for The Cure.

Rick Joseph



ALBERT COLLINS. Pic: GEORGE BODNAR

Ice-pickin' with the big Thor ...

Albert Collins

Dingwalls

Sergeant Pluck's exposition of Atomic Theory as related in Flann O' Brien's *The Third Policeman* indicated that people who constantly rode bicycles over rough terrain would find their molecules intermingling with those of the machine until they became "half people and half bicycles".

This theory could just as easily be applied to musicians and their instruments. Just watch Albert Collins closely. His inspiration stems from just about every old blues man that ever became a legend; T-Bone Walker, Freddie King, Lightning Hopkins and Albert King are all cited as influences by him, and his own style has since become known as "Ice-pickin' ".

The cCapo clamped high on the guitar neck, he plays with thumb and forefinger, picking out notes like hailstones and illustrating a great line in comic guitar dialogue in a couple of the slower numbers.

"Mah guitar's like a Model-T Ford. Ya gotta run it awhile afore it gets hot," he warned at the beginning of his set. But by the fourth number "Frosty", everything was ticking over just fine; so well that he walked right off the stage into the audience and right through Dingwalls to the back, playing all the while.

The Freeze-Up remained on stage to provide a fine, tight backdrop for Collins' extraordinary performance. Keyboardist Alan Fealdman richly contrasted the freezing steel of Martin Stone's guitar and Collins' own splashing fire.

Alb's voice was good if unremarkable, but who cares about that with such an articulate guitar?

"Honey Hush Ya Talk Too Much", "Things I Used To Do" and "Cold, Cold Feeling" were all played, and by the time he was half-way through his set the crowd was cookin', sweating' and talkin' to the man as he pulled out more and more shimmering sounds.

There were some objections to his preambles about old friends like Talkin' Slim, but cries of "We didn't come here for no history lesson Albert, get on down" caused no ill-feeling.

And get on down he did, 'Ice-pickin' ' again from the dressing room until the response brought him back.

I'm not a blues aficionado and find it acceptable only in small doses, but I tip my hat to Albert Collins. One comment overheard from the surrounding buffs was "He could teach Muddy a thing or two..."

Albert Collins: Fire and Ice. If you can't stand the heat, don't sit in the snowstorm.

Neil Norman

999

Manchester

Now I know what stupidity is: it's ignoring roads like ice-rinks, no buses, no petrol *and* the last episode of *The Dain Curse* to see 999.

They are of course one of the many acts UA have nimbly signed, only to be consigned to a rigid 2-albums-and-4-singles stratagem which is a great formula for coining money *and* knocking all creativity out of a formative act in very quick order.

999 are steering themselves down a rut so well worn that their set could have been planned by a tone-deaf computer.

The songs are identikit post-punk, attacked at such a pace that the occasionally interesting lead guitar work gets totally buried. The vocals are distinct, but lines like *"I believe in homicide"* and conceptual non-starters about "Action", "Soldiers" and the IRA serve no obvious purpose except to remind one of the Army Recruiting Office.

Nick Cash has presence and verve — a strong plus — but doesn't attempt to escape the formal role-play. He has lots of nice things to say about Mancunians, does a passable sub-Jimmy Pursey line on audience participation, thanks everyone very sincerely for coming, and when not doing any of these things runs frantically from stage left to right exercising his facial and tummy muscles.

It's a sad realisation that the most interesting number they do is their early single, "Emergency"; and that by the end of the set the most interesting figure on stage is the bouncer.

999 are like that bouncer: what they do, they do very well, but who needs it? Who needs a new Slade or another Rich Kids?

Ian Wood

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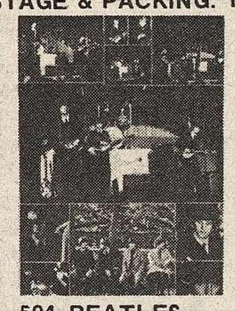
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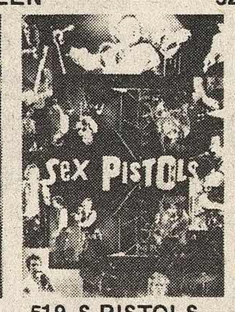

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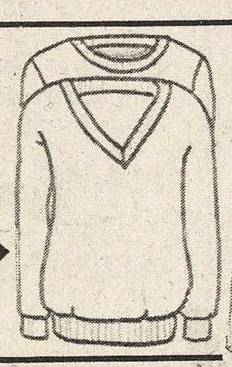

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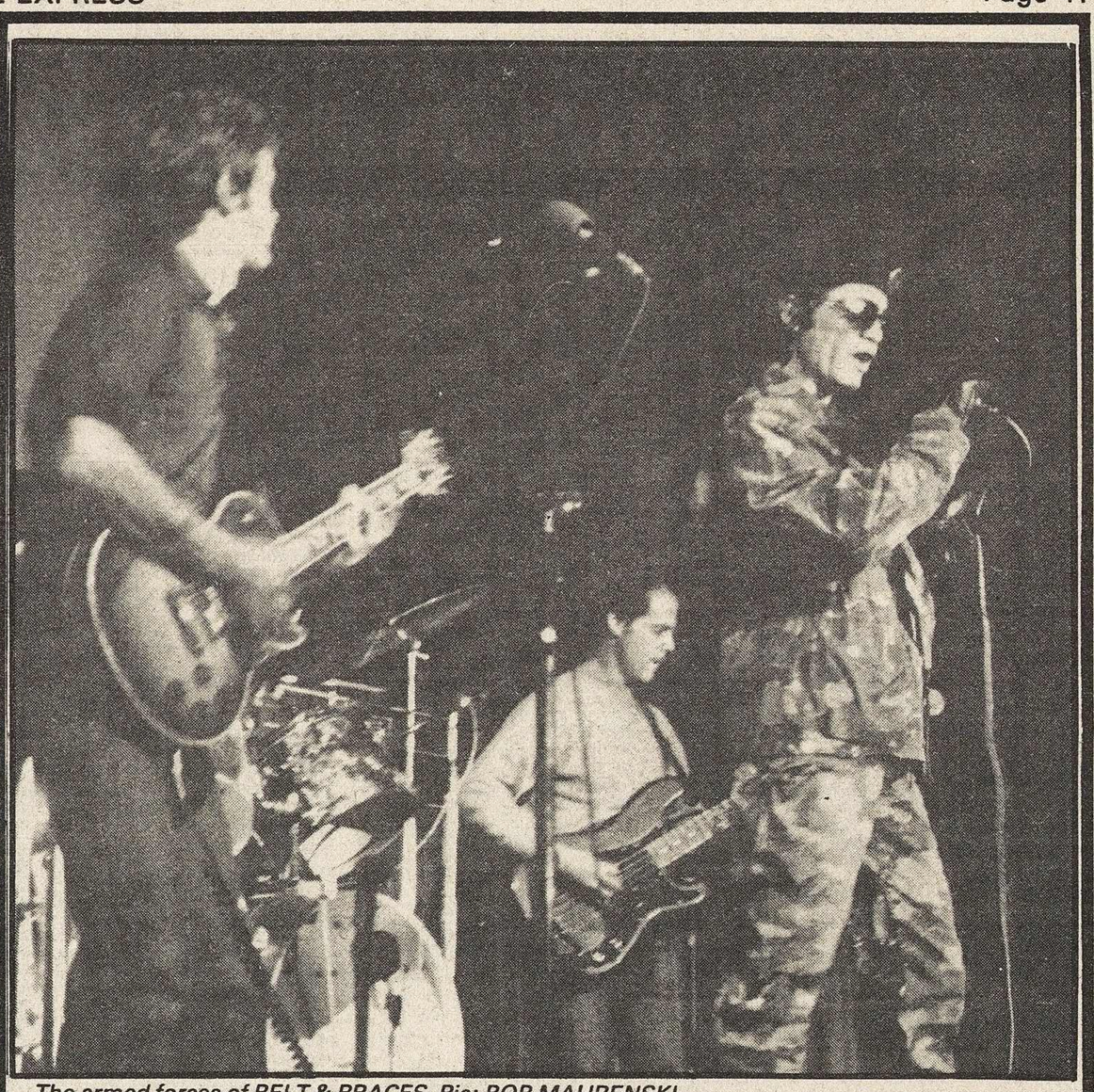

The armed forces of BELT & BRACES. Pic: BOB MAURENSKI

Mobilise your conscience

Belt And Braces

Leeds

Even with no-nonsense political troupers like Belt And Braces, there are two sides to every story.

It's not enough to praise them as extremely competent rock musicians with a thorough understanding of the grey areas of contemporary politics; nor would it be fair to dismiss them as rank and file activists using rock as a cheap vehicle to reach some of 'the masses'.

The truth, as with all unnatural fusions, lies somewhere else, between and beyond the obvious.

Like any commune that *works,* the Belt And Braces co-operative is a four-way effort. Fronted by guitarist John Fiske and keyboardist Jeni Barnett (both also on vocals), tightly backed by bassist Simon Skinner and drummer Jim Bywater, this latest political combo cuts plenty of ice.

Nevertheless, it's possible their *Red Rock Revue* could be dismissed for unnecessarily complicating things (even for veering towards a kind of cabaret presentation), and for appealing more directly to the white liberal *Guardian* reader than to the dyslexic kid in the street.

Indeed, it's true that Belt And Braces' lyrics contain a veritable profusion of words suffixed by *'. . . usion/ution'*, and that their titles ("Disillusion Is No Use" and "Poverty Is Not Dead") don't exactly roll off the tongue.

It's also true that here at the Steve Rowley-directed Thoresby Community Theatre, and elsewhere, they'll be preaching to the converted or else to young 'uns neither old nor wise enough to know the difference between stimulating fodder for creative discussion, and propaganda as straight as it comes.

Still, there's a lot about *Red Rock Revue* that even Tom Robinson would admire.

An effective slide show for a backdrop seized both the time and the poignancy points, the projectionist syncronising his trigger finger with each and every musical twist. The tour de force, "Anger On The Road" broiled to a crescendo as convincingly as any regular rock finale, while the slides zoomed in on the trademarks of the revolution badges. "Pogo On A Nazi", Smash The Cohabitation Rule", "Civil Servants Against The Nazis" were among the more evocative.

Needless to say, it all brought requests for "more" and needless to say, "more" was not forthcoming: you don't return to the scene of the crime when you're Putsching to the Front.

Like the guy in the *Guardian* says, I *urge* you to see them. If you're at all interested in 'the revolution', or in what it means to other people, then this outfit really is obligatory viewing.

No *committed* presence in our society can go ignored. Not even a four-piece pressure group.

Emma Ruth

Gloria Mundane

Gloria Mundi

Music Machine

Itching themselves in a corner, the trivial looming Gloria Mundi continue the self-pretence.

They make a messy music, a jumble of Magazine and Dreary Druid gummy gothic that dribbles and splutters, and purports to alienate but merely irritates. It's morbid and moribund, close to the Doctors of Madness; flash and faded, close to Ultravox with sax and keyboards embellishing the standard rock line-up.

They contrive to confront their audience, using volume, lights, long structures and crude mime as methods of assault. Any message, any meaning inherent in this confrontation has no chance amongst the tedious trickery, inadequate musical activity and stiff, listless presentation the group feebly favours.

They have no presence and fail to evoke an atmosphere. They are dull.

Their set comprises long, grim pieces garishly and clumsily decorated with fancifully disorientating lyrics, diffident discords, plain rhythms and melodramatic vocals.

Two lead singers, a po-faced male-female double act, spit out long lifeless lines that angrily and emptily demand action and awareness. There is no fight, no bite in their delivery, but much trite vocal posturing: dumb stiff dancing, desperate wide-eyed stares; trimmings that are meaningless alongside the flat, feeble unimaginative music.

Gloria Mundi don't disturb. They bore.

Paul Morley

The Physicals

Hope and Anchor

A free EP called "All Sexed Up" was a bonus at this Physicals gig, and the band wished us all an 'excessive' evening.

Apparently the IBA were in a similarly overblown state when they slapped a ban on the record to stop it soiling our soundwaves. "Sexed Up" offers sweaty vocals from Alan Lee Shaw and a neat bass line from Crister Sol; but it's really a modest little ditty, unlikely to damage either the libido or the unsuspecting public.

The gig was unassuming and the Hope's dank cellar offered room for dancing, which suited the audience fine. After a rousing "Lust For Life", the band surged into their best number of the night, "You Do Me In" (also on the EP but in a less sophisticated form). A slow, ominous beginning, pierced by Steve Schmidt's lead, gradually built into a rapid-fire coda that had the singer's head almost banging the low ceiling.

Most of the set comprised New York Dolls-type rockers, but better pacing could result in a less excessive, more satisfying show. The band look good, show a fun, quirky taste in lyrics; but stronger material coupled with a hint of shading could make all the difference.

If the revamped version of "You Do Me In" is any indication, then it's an exercise The Physicals are working on.

Martha Ellen Zenfell

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Soft Boys

Nashville

Dama Edna and The Damned punctured London's monotony uptown, while platoons of thrillgazers crammed into North End Road's hottest niterie.

Andy Arthurs' R.A.C. launched the soiree on an unpredictable course. Their set was an enthusiastic onslaught of tight light metal, remarkable mainly for the incongruous figure cut by AA himself: as wholesome as the mechanic next door in his day-glo boiler-suit, yet given to the most chilling falsetto since Russel Mael sat in a tub of dry ice.

I liked the way they handled "Psycho Killer", but couldn't unfold my arms for most of their act.

The Soft Boys' busy performance was a beehive of frantic energy aimed at evoking a mood, but succeeding at the expense of musical unity.

For influences they delved into an eclectic pot-pourri of musical snatches and styles, some of which surfaced elegantly while a lot of it sank in a quag of subliminal complexity.

Their unorthodoxy is revealed most strongly through singer Robyn Hitchcock, who hails from an abyss of his own.

A latter day Bela Lugosi look-alike, he growled his farrago of self-penned songs, touching upon private obsessions of transexuality, shellfish, crowbar wallers and Sandra's brain transplant. He's a closet genius in the Syd Barrett vein, and a fine vocalist to boot.

Dynamics were supplied by the agile fretting and footwork of guitarist Kimberly Rew, cleverly twiddling with shards of creative feedback; and Jim Melton, who trapezed on and offstage to play spicy harmonica or de-mist his mirror shades. Cohesion was dutifully provided (almost) by drummer Morris Windsor and Andy 'Pigworker' Metcalfe on bass.

Together they handled mutant hybrids of reggae, psychadelia, punkthrash and Gregorian plainsong, and high-lighted the show with some unexpectedly good R&B tunes.

Not withstanding the dictates of fashion, The Soft Boys may be destined for a future flirt with *fame*. Their impish inventiveness and disregard for rock protocol make them unlike any other band in business. But in their eagerness to subvert, they frequently lost control of the musical pacing. Result: noise; hip-fracture.

I'll gladly look up any future Soft gig, if only to pick up the bits I missed when I blinked during tonight's show.

Rick Joseph

Spot the lobotomy . . . THE SOFT BOYS — pic, ROB HALL.

The Swap A Brain Gang

London Zoo

Windsor Castle

From the moment London Zoo start playing it's obvious who they've been most influenced by. It's The Clash all over again.

But they're not just a bunch of facile impersonators. They've formulated their own ideas, their own impetus, and they play a fast, sharp set that screams for attention . . . and *gets* it.

The first three numbers are hammered out in quick succession giving no time for thought; you decide then and there if you like them, because that's how they continue, with just enough variation in the arrangements to be unpredictable.

Zoo have only been in existence for about four months, although previously they played together as Blunt Instrument: an unsuccessful band that managed to release one single. They still use a lot of their original material, totally rearranged (they tell me), including several potential 45s, particularly "Motorcycle Messenger".

There's some excellent playing by Nick Aldridge (lead guitar), Ed Shaw (bass) and Rob Sandall (rhythm and lead vocal). They have empathy, and the sound travels like an electric current from the band to the audience.

They should cut the crap in the middle though: a totally futile spoken ditty which only served to check the energy of the song. And likewise "No Love In A Computer" has a dateline questionnaire reading midway.

The music is good enough without these high school pop interludes.

But I suspect the band's choice of single would be "Walkie Talkie"; although it could make the charts it would receive a lot of justifiable criticism. After all it is their *best* imitation of The Clash.

Deanne Pearson

After The Fire

Marquee

Once the acceptable face of art-rock, After The Fire have now firmly elbowed the Nice / Genesis affectations in favour of greater thrust and economy.

Keyboard consoler Peter Banks still dominates, but new guitarist John Russell gives the music its spine. His version of the Lizzies' patented spring-heeled chord sequence on "Love Is Alive" typifies the new accessibility.

Stage presence, however, is down to the rhythm section.

Singer / bassist Andy Piercy never stops moving, a sardonic grin penetrating his beard and little round shades. Drummer Ivor Twidell, a leering, bearded Keith Moon / Lowell George figure, provides light relief, changing bifocals for each song. Ivor in disguise with glasses?

Piercy's voice is an oddly effective blend of humour and commitment; but Banks, arguably a more distinctive singer, is hardly featured.

A recurring Supertramp piano riff mars "Some Time To Think" and "Suspended Animation" threatened boredom. Then the abrasive "Life In The City" spurs Banks to make a more creative contribution, setting the standard for the rest of the set.

"One Rule For You One Rule For Me" is rightly greeted ecstatically by the faithful; it's a gem. Featuring a haunting keyboard theme and Piercy's best singing of the night, it could even be a hit.

After The Fire have attained genuine cult status; their drive, humour and zippy toons set them apart from their peers. The next step is the biggest, and although they may not be This Year's Thing, they offer a real alternative.

Harry George

The Jags

Golden Lion

Don't let new wave appearances fool you because The Jags' music, like that of their obvious influences Lowe and Costello owes much to the '60s. But they avoid being written off as just another bunch of impersonators with a danceable yanked-up Brinsleys sound featuring some clever lyrics, jangling guitar, acappella breaks, excellent harmony lines and abrupt endings. Originals like "What Can I Do?" (reminiscent of Berry's "Come On") and "Woman's World" score high as possible singles material.

But the majority of their songs are derivative: the spectre of Costello is ever-present; and in "Dancin' Again" the vocal delivery is pure Lynott.

Singer Nick Watkinson knows his stuff but comparisons with established artists are unavoidable, and if The Jags want to go places they need individuality.

Luckily, their shortcomings are compensated for by their musicianship. The talents of drummer Neil Whattaker (ex-Krakatoa), guitarist John Alder and bassist Steve Prudence were accidentally revealed when Watkinson quit the stage midset with guitar trouble. There followed an impressive six minutes of "Police And Thieves" when Alder (on leftie Fender) delighted as he pulled out every reggae stop, clipped and lyrical, stretching out in complete control.

At least The Jags have potential. Their set is fast, catchy and enjoyable, but also lightweight and somewhat limited. By the time they reach the studio, comparisons should be unwarranted as versatility *isn't* their problem.

Elissa Van Poznak

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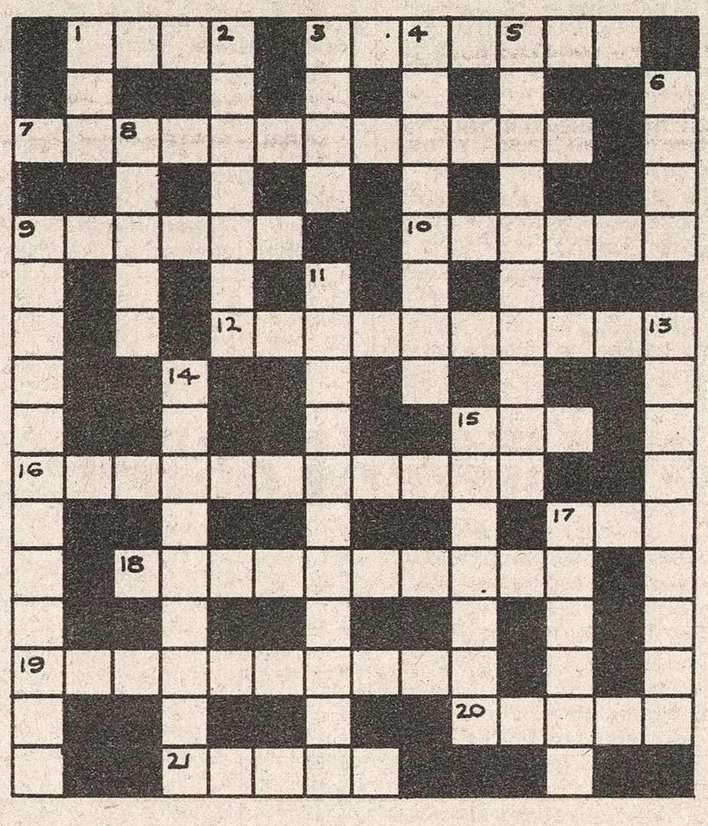
ACROSS

1 Van Morrison connection in the music mainstream!
3 See 17 across
7 Or do what dove (anag. two words)
9 Stones' first hit single (4, 2)
10 Heroic axeman?!
12 Having taken your Gillette Twin-Blade to the pet goldfish! Like on the Lennon LP . . . (6,4)
15 Janis/. . ./Anderson
16 Ideal for landscaping the rock garden! (6,5)
17 & 3 across Legendary R&B vocal stylist whose British hits included "Take These Chains From My Heart"
18 "----- -- --- Darkness" (5,2,3)
19 Veteran U.S. pop singer who's alternatively human and animal! (3,7)
20 Record label
21 Type of Latin-American music popular in New York

DOWN

1 Virgins on Apple — count 'em!
2 Otherwise known as the narcissist's song — think tabloid!
3 This is your Commander speaking . . .



4 Axeman who, back in the days when those things mattered, used to claim the fastest fingers in the west (5, 3)
5 Some confusion over flat Lettie leased — George's boys will sort it out!
6 & 9 down Check on Jo or Pearl (anag. three words)
8 See 13
9 See 6
11 Veteran American r'n'r performer who cut the original "Blue Suede Shoes" (4,7)
13 & 8 Stones No. 1 from 1969 (5,4,5)
14 Virgin combo currently in for servicing! (3,6)
15 & 17 down Recent disco hit recent disco hit recent disco hit recent . . .

LAST WEEK'S ANSWERS

ACROSS: 1 "Fat Bottomed Girls"; 5 (Tim) Rice; 6 (Robert) Johnson; 9 Inez (Foxx); 12 (Peter) Skellern; 13 Diana (Ross); 14 Ronnie Scott; 15 Mojo; 16 Long John Baldry; 19 "Aquarius"; 21 (Paul) Anka; 22 Nick (Mason); 23 Grammy; 24 Ray (Davies); 27 Osmonds; 28 & 29 "Jarrow Song"; 31 Platters. **DOWN**: 1 "For Your Pleasure"; 2 "Breaking Glass"; 3 Dion; 4 RCA; 6 Julie Covington; 7 (Frank) Sinatra; Ned (Kelly); 10 Zimmerman; 11 (Nick) Mason; 17 Lenny (Bruce); 18 Jacksons; 20 "Stand Up"; 25 Yoko; 26 Free.

THE TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Tora, Tora Tora . . .

America avenges Pearl Harbour in guitar battle. CHARLES SHAAR MURRAY is the referee.

Right: Japan's IBANEZ MCZOODS. Left: America's WESTBURY 3203.

WHEN LEO FENDER introduced his pioneering Telecaster (then known as the Broadcaster) in 1949, he was working in the dark. Though Les Paul and Paul Bigsby had been experimenting with solid guitars for more than ten years, Fender was the first man to actually manufacture and mass-produce such an animal.

Similarly, when he manufactured the first Fender bass three years later he was again sailing into uncharted waters. All he knew was that all those damn guitar players were making so much racket with their Telecasters that the poor old bass player was plunking his fingers to the bone and not getting heard. So — being a logical sort of person — he invented a portable electric instrument which could be played by either bass players or guitarists who wanted to switch axes. The result was rock and roll.

Thirty years on, instrument manufacturers have had a lot more to go on than simple motherwit and suss. They know which of their competitors is selling how many of which models, they know which optional extras are most in demand (for example: Fender are now fitting five-way instead of three-way selector switches to Stratocasters because so many musicians are now installing them into their Strats) and they work very closely with musicians in order to supply What The Public Wants.

The end result is that a lot of new production guitars bear close resemblences to the custom-built axes turned out by the expensive, specialised craftsmen. Last year's optional extras are this year's standard fixtures.

Not surprisingly, the Japanese companies are a lot faster off the mark than their American counterparts when it comes to a little judicious trend-hopping. No sooner has a new guitar, amplifier, effects unit, pick-up or switch unit appeared on the American market than it's been flown to Japan, taken to bits and copied.

No longer purely in the business of turning out replicas of American guitars, the latest Japanese gear uses original designs which incorporate the latest American ideas, and the innovations of the American custom luthiers are having a far greater influence on Japanese-produced equipment than they are on the American Giants.

Despite its Spanish-sounding name, Ibanez is a Japanese company. To be precise, its instruments are designed in the States and manufactured in Japan, and they are giving Yamaha a severe run for their money as the most prestigious Japanese manufacturer. Their range is almost entirely original, and musicians giving Ibanez their endoresement and design input include George Benson, Steve Miller, Bob Weir of The Grateful Dead and Paul Stanley of Kiss.

The Ibanez under examination is the MC-300, approximately halfway up their Musician range and weighing in with a recommended retail price of £311.08 (inc VAT), which makes it dearer than a Telecaster and cheaper than either a Stratocaster or any new Gibson except their budget The Paul guitar (this example supplied by Chappell's of New Bond St., by the way).

It looks like it ought to cost infinitely more: its mahogany body with the contrasting ash stripe gives it a resemblance to the latest American Gretsch and Kramer guitars, and it's there to emphasise the fact that the neck and the central section are made in one piece for added sustain (unlike Gibson, who glue their necks on, and Fender who bolt theirs).

The MC-300's other unusual feature is the Tri-Sound pickup system. Each pick-up has a three-position toggle switch (in addition to the customary Gibson-style control system of a selector plus tone and volume knobs for each pick-up) which allows you to convert the pickup into either a single-coil, humbucker or reverse-phase humbucker .

I checked it out at a gig using an ancient AC30 cranked most of the way up, and it sounded fairly nice until the whole band started playing, whereupon I discovered that the only sound that would actually penetrate above the band in full flight was a rather nasty 1968 Eric Clapton tone, whereas my old SG Junior could cut through at the same amp setting with no trouble whatsoever.

Both the appearance and the features of the MC-300 would seem to be tailored to the demands of U.S. Stadium rockers. It'd probably function beautifully plugged into a wall of Ampegs, Acoustics or Marshalls or in the studio. The Tri-Sound pick-up would seem (subjectively at least, considering it was tested under total combat conditions) to change the *volume* of the sound rather than the time i.e. it got louder and bassier as you flipped the toggles.

The body was light and comfortable (and for all I know still is), but the neck was so wide and flat that it was almost taking the piss. I mean, I thought I *liked* wide, flat necks until I tried this one. Still, that's personal preference and a lot of players really like wide, flat necks. Me, I didn't really groove on this particular guitar, and if I had £311 going spare I'd be more inclined to look for a vintage secondhand Strat — or else save up another hundred and fifty and try for a Les Paul.

The next night's gig saw me struggling with another unfamiliar weapon, the *Westbury Custom*. Westbury are an American brand just getting off the ground, and they're distributed over here by Rose Morris, the people who bring you Ovation guitars and Marshall amps. They're making their debut, fairly conservatively, with one guitar and one bass, and to say I was impressed with their guitar would be an understatement.

Selling for a round £300 rrp inc VAT (not counting the case), the Westbury Custom now provides another viable alternative (outside of second-hand Strats, that is) to the punter who regards £300 as his top whack. There's the Telecaster — 30 years old and still rockin' — Gibson's The Paul (though I'll reserve judgement until I try one) and now this.

What you get is a slim, unassuming little chunk of dark brown maple with an arched top, two pick-ups with the usual Gibsonian, one-selector-two-tone-two-volume arrangement, a wide, flat neck that's not as extreme as the Ibanez and a six-position pick-up programmer which is The Secret Weapon.

Like the Tri-Sound system, this enables you to change the configuration of the pick-ups Position 1 gives you bridge pick-up as a single-coil and fingerboard pick-up as a humbucker, position 2 gives you two humbuckers and so on, giving you all combinations of the two plus two single-coils and two humbuckers out of phase. Best of all, you don't get serious volume jumps as you switch configurations, enabling you to maintain smooth output level.

My only criticism of the custom would be that the overall sound of the thing is a touch on the middley sound, so I'd recommend pairing it with an amp that'll put a little added treble on when you need it. Otherwise, it's certainly a fine little guitar, and Westbury and Rose Morris are to be commended for presenting it at what is by contemporary standards a very reasonable price.

Incidentally, it came with a very serious little case (£60 extra) which, despite its Samsonite honeymoon-luggage look, certainly does the business.

What worries me about both these guitars is the breed of antique-furniture finish which modern consumers — in the Americas, at least — seem to demand. What was so great about old Stratocasters and Fender Jaguars was their sleazy, tacky, flashy visual — they looked like they were made for Buddy Holly and The Ventures rather than Yenhudi Menuhin and Jacqueline du Pre. Yet another symptom of rock musicians taking themselves a little too seriously.

This column, by the way, is the last in the series. I hope that somebody, at least, found it useful. All in all, most of the instruments that passed through my hands while I was running this department (with the exception of the Yamaha SG 1000 and the Westbury Custom) confirmed my prejudices vis-a-vis modern guitars. If you wanna buy a guitar, go for a second-hand Gibson or Fender. You know it makes sense.

May your jack plugs stay ever soldered and your strings never break.

GABRIEL

From page 23

happens at a building site is that work goes on, and that was the idea behind my show. There was another thing that I wanted to do which wasn't possible with the scaffolding we had, which was to interrupt the sight-line of the audience, so that you see the band through scaffolding. I say that now because I'm sure someone else will do it," he laughs.

"I've seen those lamps copied since I've been using them. I asked for subway or pool table lights and Showco came up with those. What I'd like to do if it's possible is not use any rock lights at all. I think if you sometimes set yourself certain limitations you sometimes encourage a more creative situation than when you're able to fulfil your wildest fantasy."

One glaring anachronism in Gabriel's show is the exaggerated glam-rock posing of saxist Timmy Capello. Did Gabriel instruct him to behave in such an anomalous way?

"It's just him being him. He's like a caricature. I try and give people the space to project themselves, rather than just be faceless musicians, so the thing takes on the character of strong individuals coming through in a band rather than just blankness. He is it and he's taking the piss out of it at the same time.

"I've always felt very uncomfortable with the term 'solo career'. Most of the things I do are not solo in that I use creatively people that I'm working with."

Why has he chosen to work with American musicians?

"Initially the choice was there because I felt there were some feels that an American rhythm section gets which are hard to find in English people. I wanted to try an American approach to an English style of songwriting.

"That was the original thinking. It just happened that when I was looking for other people that the musicians they suggested were people living in America. So it was initially by design and the rest by coincidence.

How does he think their approach differs from English players?

"Generalisations are never really true, but (laughs) I still continue to generalise. Sometimes it's actually where, say, the snare goes down on the beat. When Robert and I were recording the first album with the other (American) musicians, sometimes we'd be anticipating and they wouldn't be there. Very small instances like that. Feel. Plus I was going for a rhythm section that's simple and solid rather than decorative. I think Larry (Fast — synthesizer player) is probably more of a European player in his approach although he comes from New Jersey."

LOOKING BACK on his 'solo career' so far, had he expected to sell more records than he has done?

"Not really. I think the first album sold a lot better than I expected and the second one didn't sell as well as the first one in this country. But I think it sold more in America and France. I think the second one was a little more difficult to get into, so overall I'm not dissatisfied."

And his plans for the future?

"There are a few projects I'm trying to get together. One is an idea for a touring train. There are several goals, but mobility is one of them. It would get rid of the normal touring situation where you go into a hall at midday — at least the crew do — and set up the stuff and it comes down the same night.

"The train would pull into a site — the sites are a problem but looking into it there are places like salt mines which have sidings. There's a nuclear power station in Vienna which was killed off by referendum which has excellent train tracks. There's a German TV programme which actually has a train track running through the studio. And over here there are places like the Roundhouse.

"Initially it would have to be outdoor situations with sidings to pull up the train. The side of the carriage would drop down and the back line would be permanently set up inside the carriage. The lights would fold out of the roof area and the PA would be in the carriages either side.

"At the moment we're trying to see British Rail about it. The carriages themselves cost about £100,000. Rank Xerox have a train that would cope with all the variations in European standards except Spain and Portugal, so if it were able, and British Rail would work it out, we would get hold of that one.

"It would allow you to pull into a gig, unfold, play the gig, fold it up and pull out like the Whistle Stop Tour. So you could perhaps play, physical health withstanding, a lunchtime, teatime, evening and maybe late-night concert. Not that anyone wants to work that hard, but the theory is that you might get to play places that don't normally see rock shows.

"What I'm hoping might be possible is if I get a lot of records, T-shirts and goodness knows what else, the merchandising could be well organised and the concert could be free. That's the aim. I lose money on tours anyway — although I didn't lose much on this last one — so if I don't lose much it's feasible.

"The initial cost for setting up the train and the sites would be heavy, but logically I think there is a very strong argument for setting up some form of rock circuit in Europe and the States which is train-based.

"I've already talked to promoters. They all thought it was a wild idea, but some thought it was possible.

"I reckon if I turn 30 per cent of my ideas into reality then I'll be doing all right."

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Gasbag Strictly Militant Style

Tony Parsons and Julie Burchill are (seemingly) lovely geezers, but after reading their reviews of "Street Legal" and "Some Girls" who among us can honestly say that they didn't feel like screaming ... well, *something* at them.

Oh, there's something about you pair. When anyone is discovered holding a different opinion than your goodselves, whether over clothes, music, religion, etc., you find it necessary to go into a great deal of (strictly amateur) psychological / sociological "investigation" to prove the offenders corrupt, reactionary — or if you're feeling particularly compassionate, merely brainwashed by society.

So, if I like Bob Dylan it can only possibly be "in the way that housewives need tranks." But all that stuff about old age/nostalgia is obvious rubbish, 'cos though I have some liking for "Street Legal" (and "Anarchy In The UK" and "Satisfaction" *and* "Moonlight Sonata") when ole Bob was actually singing "Times they are a ..." I was still struggling to get me toothless jaws around "Baa Ba Black Sheep".

Self analysis is definitely not on the bill for you guys though. Unfortunate that, 'cos if you'd applied you methods to yourselves it could've been a *very* interesting piece. I'd suggest that just as *you* suggest that writers and fan have their objectivity seriously impaired by a misguided loyalty to the heroes and ideals of "66, you ditto '76. And when it comes to continuing old allegiance for artists / fashions New Wave followers are as guilty as old. How else could the Sex Biggles single, probably the greatest atrocity ever committed to record, follow its illustrious predecessors into the top ten?

Although you profess to actually rather liking funny old Charlie and Angus, despite their little ways, they must be taken as belonging to that strange collective you call Dylan Fans, at whom you dedicate such fluent abuse. The idea that these writers were scared into renewed affection for Mr. Dylan by either the attack or subsequent withdrawal of the folk in the weird pants and hairdos is just d-a-f-t. Pausing only to cross themselves and put a garlic nosegay in the bottonhole they retreat (their minds still darkened with superstition) into the security of mind afforded by "protective icons" such as the long playing record known as "Street Legal". Yeah, it's silly isn't it? Murray was welcoming the imminent onslaught of punkdom before it was even trendy, and I don't the Pistols making him feel obliged to bad mouth Dylan. And that's rilly just how it should be.

complete editorial volteface on the Stones Dylan albums re-reviewing both records — without realising that you are attempting *exactly one hundred per cent the same thing!* Except here of course the offended orthodoxy is not West Coast Lethargy, but "And we don't wear flares etc".

In the same fashion you seek to perpetuate the dichotomy, the sheep and goats thing, between the "punks" and the average "orthodox rock fan", who you say found 1976-7 a "foreign hell". Pi-jaw. The orthodox rock fan in this country is now very much into punk, having been converted somewhere about the middle of '77 (just look at Peel's festive wotnot).

Now from the general to the specific, or something.

1/ The business surrounding the *Rolling Stone* writer getting thrown off Stones tour is more open to controversy than you suggested. Jagger's story is that the order to get out and walk was strictly a joke, but the writer took it to his chicken heart.

2/ The normally smug *Village Voice* carried six reviews of the rotten *Renaldo And Clara* movie, which were all at least as snide as yours. Awe and reverence did not gain the day as you seem to suggest.

3/ There has always been a streak of that commodity known as misogyny in D's work. It's nothing new, and there is still no law compelling one to support the Womens Lib Movt. and I hope there never is. Comparisons with son of Sam are just not on. Dylan has never murdered anyone, which is probably more than can be said for The Sex Pistols.

4/ Is 95% of all music, really worthless? I mean utterly totally irredeemably worthless? I honestly don't believe it. The scarey implication would seem to be that you regard 95% of humanity as similarly worthless. If Dylan is a mysoginist does this make you misanthropists?

5/ You really rather clutch at straws in your compulsion to find fault. While accusing the Stones of being "depraved, debauched", you simultaneously turn on Dylan for using the words "cleanliness" and "purity".

6/ Mock-mystic? Well, to the good no nonsense materialists that you seem to be all mystic is going to be "mock (Wish you really *could* like the lyrics to reggae songs, doncha, I bet). Dylan's "cryptic" (read allusive / elusive / illusive) verbiage works in much the same way as do the archetypal, suggestive immages of the Tarot — which you no doubt despise — by provoking the imagination, even (gulp) the "subconscious" into joining the dots provided. What you call "worthless Dylanisms" — the pseudo-Biblicakl/poetical bits, which admittedly sound a bit funny in 1978 — make up the bulk of the words of the mid-'60s masterpieces.

You'd be right in saying that I like many others, find it easier to be indulgent to the faults of tried and trusted favourites. This thing called loyalty is just one of those infinitely irritating, strangely touching foibles which Homo Sapiens has made his own. It makes men and women faithful to their spouses, fight for their countries and get beat up for their team (even if it is Yeovil Town). Of course you, J & T , as true puritans, must continue to castigate such weakness and folly in all its forms. But "hold (a little) of you judgement for yourselves" and you may just find the same "fault" lurking where you least expect it. Which of course reminds me

Jagger prepares for battle

— if you're wasting time bitching so am I.
JOHN LAW, Yeovil, Somerset.

If you think we are (a) still living in Roxyland, (b) owners of Sex Biggles "Cosh The Ginger" or (c) lovely geezers, you just haven't been paying attention.

Some points ... 1. If you're gullible enough to believe Jagger's story, you're as dumb as he hopes you are. 2. None of the *Village Voice* reviews were anywhere near as snide as ours, and we are deeply hurt that you should stoop so low as to suggest this. 3. Anyone who croons, *"Can you cook and sew, make flowers grow, do you understand my pain?"* may be a 'misogynist' in your book, John, but we prefer the term 'wanker'. 4. Music industry product is made of black plastic, not flesh and blood. Didn't you notice? 5. Straw-clutching? Don't have to. Mick and Bob make our job easy for us all by themselves. 6. We refuse to answer the question, "Is Dylan a mock-mystic?" 7. If you truly equate all the admirable human traits you mention with sucking up to some fat, old and rich bard's latest dreck, you must be some kind of pillock. — TP & JB.

From: National Homes for the Over 30s (Patrons Julie Burchill and Tony Parsons).

This is an appeal on behalf of the millions of unfortunate people who are "pushing forty". The great majority of them are too senile to look after themselves and must be cared for in one of our many institutions up and down the country. These veterans of "Rock Around The Clock" who fought in the aisles for the right to rip up seats, so precious to today's young people, do deserve your help in their twilight years as they lose their faculties and wits. Their only desire is to while away the time listening to their Bob Dylan records. Will you help them? All contributions should be sent to our esteemed patrons who are famous producers of organic fertiliser.
The Matron, National Homes For The Over 30s, Corby, Northants.

If "Street Legal" is as bad as Mr Parsons and Miss Burchill make out then how come the rest of the *NME* staff voted it number seven in their 'Vinyl Finals Of '78'?
M.F. COOKS, Croydon, Surrey.
Cos we're all morons? — NS

I find it hypocritical that you write a four-page article on music in Lyon and complain about the lack of success there while not realising exactly the same thing is happening in Brighton. You report that in Lyon there is a "scene" with almost 20 bands but in Brighton there are well over 20 good bands, all struggling to get themselves in music papers such as *NME* while you babble on about France, which most readers couldn't care less about!

Only a month ago, a compilation LP of Brighton bands came out (paid for by the hard-up bands themselves) but did you review or even mention it? Of course not!

What about a mention in your sacred tabloid of The Molesters, The Pihranhas, or even Smeggy and the Cheasy Bits?
AN ANGRY PERSON (who lives in Brighton and has never been to France and doesn't want to).

Lucky we're not as stay-at-home and prejudiced as you, otherwise we couldn't review the LP next week. — N.S.

Congratulations! *NME* do it again. I was (formerly) under the impression that 'M' stood for 'Musical': I now doubt this after your article on 'French Rock' (and it was supposed to be about the musical, nor geological type, wasn't it? — Wasn't it?)

How you managed to compose an article on this topic even without mentioning Magma, Gong, Ange or Etron Fon Leloublan was beyond me. I'll concede that Gong are now less rock and more jazz and that Ange have been virtually silent since their four excellent albums of 1973-1975 — but does that merit their complete omission? You could have at least told us what happened to Ange (and, indeed, what Magma are doing, if anything). Etron Fou (and the rest of the French R.I.O.. bands) certainly deserved a mention since they are something genuinely new (as in 'nouveau', not as in 'wave').

When you do your article on German rock (as I hope you will) do *please* let us know what has happened to Amon Duul, Can, Faust and even Nektar. Or does the 'N' for 'New' exclude anything more than 6 weeks old?
CHRIS JOHNSON, Dorset.

No, but the article was about French bands actually playing and recording — unlike almost everyone you list. Anyway, keep quiet or you'll have MacKinnon threatening a 13 part 'Looking Back' on Magma — N.S.

To misquote: *"What if I should go ... I wonder if I flew one day and no-one ever knew I'd gone ..."*

Your "deceased" list of the new year issue is incomplete.
A. RAVEN, Nurbury.

Our sincerest apologies. The missing name is Sandy Denny — N.S.

The pretentious puerile Paul (Morley) and ancient but adolescent Angus (McKinnon) are slowly but surely sowing the seeds of several subscribers' aversion to what was once a literary laugh-ridden lexicon of life's musical meaning. Reviews should be comment on content, not an excuse for would-be blank generation blank verse from 'O' level English alliteration-obsessed schoolboys to prove how well they can use their recently acquired Thesaurusssss (maaaaan ...). "Auspices and entrails" indeed! (see Peter Gabriel review, January 6 issue, examples abound).
ANDRE KLARENBERG, London E8.

Your dextrous deprecation of this deplorable device is demonstrably more dashing than dumb — Nonchalant but nifty Neil Spencer.

Tut, tut, tut! *T-zers* missed out one very important award: The "Attila The Hun no quarter for the bastards" award which goes ot *NME* journalists for 100% consistency in their slam-Heavy-Metal-quick-listen-to-it-afterwards attitude.

But it didn't work did it? People still like Heavy Metal.
MICK HEGARTY, Whetstone, London.

Judging by our poll results, not too many — N.S.

ARMED LETTERS

A reader wades in

NEIL SPENCER

Shoot your shot to us at GASBAG, NME, 5-7 Carnaby Street, London W1.

T-ZERS

PICKS UP SOME FLUFF

T-zers honours the new year's honours list — or rather one bit of it, to whit Thomas Hicks of Bermondsey aka Tommy Steele OBE, formerly first homegrown rock star of this sceptred isle. Above: Tommy takes a stroll with friends circa 1960. Left: 1956 Tommy shows the three chord trick on "Rock With The Caveman" to a "Whitley Bay Grammar Schoolboy with his own skiffle group." Well that's what it says here. Modern, sorry contemporary, ain't they?

And in the death, as the dust settles in the wake of the *NME* poll, **John Wayne** gets used to life with an artificial stomach (we don't know what the fuss is all about, **Monty Smith**'s been wearing one for years), UNICEF gets back to business as usual after three days spent wiping the Brylcreem off **David Frost**'s executive armchair . . . one *T-Zer* turns to the other and in a clear, stentorian voice, fearlessly articulates the question in the minds of millions: "So what *else* is new?"

A surprising amount, actually, but before we get around to our usual panoramic survey of the squalor and misery that surround rock and roll even in this allegedly enlightened age, we'd advise you to turn to the centrespread and read, learn and inwardly digest The Poll Results.

Over and above patterns noted in our political correspondent's analysis inside, *T-Zerz* wishes to point out its surprise at the somewhat unimpressive scores logged by **Sham 69** in this poll (apart from **Mr Pursey**'s pursonal namecheck in the Most Wonderful Human Being section). You and whose army, Jim? Either Sham's fans aren't as doggedly committed as we've been led to believe, or else they're just not into filling out coupons or else they can't write . . .

Folks who certainly *can* write (we know this because we saw them do it) are the cast of the UNICEF Year Of The Child benefit where under the unctuous aegis of **David Frost** and **Robert Stigwood,** a cast of thousands (or rather thousands minus **Elton John,** who — shrewd judge of entertainment that he is — wanted to see Watford instead) donated rights to their latest MoR classics to The Children Of The World. The starstudded cast of philanthropists included **The Bee Gees** and their appalling younger sibling **Andy Gibb, Earth Wind & Fire, Abba, Olivia Newton-John, Donna Summer, Kris Kristofferson** and **Rita Coolidge, John Denver, Henry Winkler** *(didn't he used to be famous? — A Stirrer)* and — controversial as ever — **Rod Stewart.** What with the Russians objecting to his costuming and movements and some other worthless foreigners with suspicious politics objecting to his lyrics, we bet the much-travelled ex-Mod wondered why he was doing a free gig in the first place. Still, he gave generations yet unborn the benefit of future royalties from "Maggie May".

As *T-Zerz* watched the TV version of the proceedings (delicately entitled *A Gift Of Song*), some of the triple dots were heard arguing amongst themselves as to whether some of the distinguished artists concerned were actually singing live or simply moving their lips in time with recordings. And during Rod's number, the little blighters completely wrecked the solemnity of the occasion by discussing Rod's charitable propensities in the light of his manager's outburst in the *Daily Mirror* about the excessive costs of records, taking into account the fact that his £4.40 "Footloose And Fancy Free" album won *T-Zerz's* coveted **Denis Healey** Dinner Salver last year and the other fact that his cancelled New Year's Eve party at the Lyceum charged £10.80 for a ticket . . .

Truly, a most complex and unfathomable man, we thought to ourselves as we reluctantly hauled our attention elsewhere to consider the amazing scale of **Richard Nixon**'s comeback in the Americas (cheer up, **Uriah Heep** — it can be done!). Last we heard, the elderly lawyer, ex-President and maker of errors of judgement had been nominated for a Grammy Award in, natch, the Spoken Word category (eat your heart out, **John Cooper Clarke**). Dickie's in line for this great honour as a result of his truly wunnerful interviews with famous Englishman, **David Frost.** Frost is a personal friend of **The Bee Gees** . . .

The **Brothers Gibb,** incidentally, made history in yet another unlikely manner. When the Chinese Government decided to celebrate the reopening of diplomatic relations with America they held — guess what? — a *disco!* And for the news clip that was shown on TV, guess what music was played? You got it — "Stayin' Alive" by the Bee Gees, who are, as it happens, close friends of **David Frost** . . .

And speaking of close personal friends, even drummers have them. **Sham 69** drummer **Dodie** got together with a bunch of his mates to record "With A Little Help From My Friends" under the name of **Shambles,** while **Karl Burns,** Dodie's oppo in **The Fall,** has left the band for allegedly financial reasons and recorded a soon-to-be-released single with some of *his* friends under the name of **Teardrops.** The Fall have, meanwhile, completed their first album, which is — according to lean, unshaven **Paul Morley** — "A Kuhlassic". We await with interest (8½% and rising) . . .

The same tall, shambling source informs us that **John Cooper Clarke**'s next single is to be entitled "Gimmicks" and will be released in triangular orange vinyl with "I Married A Monster From Outer Space" on the B-side complete with Japanese chorus. If J.C-C thinks we're all going out to buy new stereos with triangular turntables just to hear his poxy single then he's nuts, and if Morley expects us to believe that the damn thing even exists then *he's* nuts . . . Our drama correspondent informs us that, following his smash-hit appearance on longrunning sitcom *Coronation Street,* **Graham** "Jilted John" **Fellowes** ("This generation's **Brando**" — *D. Telegraph)* is auditioning for one of the male leads in the upcoming *Rock Follies* movie. We're already cra-zee about it . . .

If we can believe **Al Clark** of Virgin Records **XTC**mania rages in America. The jovial, voluble, Spanish-born Clark, 19, further informed us that **Chatting Bonce** leader **David Byrne** jammed his synthesiser into XTC's jerky but inviting rhythms at a CBGBs gig and that well-known balding Swindoner **Barry Andrews** played on a few tracks for **Robert** 'Winbourne vibe' **Fripp's** forthcoming solo album. He didn't say *what* Andrews played, but in the middle of some incomprehensible anecdote about **Supercharge** ending up in Palma on their way to play the *Musical Express* (no relation) TV show in Barcelona, he did get around to mentioning that 'Charge's other saxophonist, **Andy Parker,** went to school with one **Declan McManus** who, by all accounts, was well into playing "Blowin' In The Wind" on his acoustic guitar during mid-morning breaks . . .

One for statisticians everywhere: **Laurie McAllister,** 21, is the oldest of **The Runaways** (backlash now into third week and cooking nicely). Laurie, if you recall, is the band's new bassist, replacing **Vickie Blue,** 36 . . .

This may cause **Graham Parker** and **Martin Belmont** to start giving each other funny looks: an article in *The Futurist* magazine claims that short people live longer than tall people. The article analyzed the life spans of 263 famous people and concluded that those over six feet tall lived an average of 73 years, but folks under 5'8" lived an average of 82 years. Your *T-Zerz* compiler who clocks in at 5'10", eagerly awaits an estimate . . .

And another collectors' racket bites the dust. Much to the delight of everybody who wants one but can't find one and the ire of everybody who has one but can't find a purchaser at the price he's demanding, we are pleased to announce that New Hormones are reissuing the pioneering **Buzzcocks'** "Spiral Scratch" E.P. (featuring impish little **Howard Devoto)** with distribution by United Artists. The sleeve will be identical to the original except for New Hormones' New Address . . .

There are very few success stories in the Naked City but this is one of them; no less than one hundred souls were turned away from **The Mekons'** epic gig at London's Hope & Anchor last week. The band, caring human beings even in triumph, were most concerned at the thought of all those people turning up and not getting in. "Stars and they still care," comments an awed **Morley** . . .

Did anyone notice? On the sleeve of the new **Blondie** 12" single, you can find a plug for their albums. You don't exactly have to haul out your magnifying glass (you do have one, don't you. We here at *T-Zers* would hate to think that any of you might be attempting to struggle through your miserable daily lives with such an artefact not concealed about your person at all times) to spot — on one of the sleeves shown thereon — that the dozy folks at Chrysalis Records have forgotten to remove the HMV £4.25 sticker. Does this mean that someone from Chrysalis' art department actually had to go out and *buy* one? . . .

Wanna be buried next to **Marilyn Monroe?** Bookshop employee **Lynn Carter** is in the final stages of negotiating $25,000 sale of the next vault to the celebrated Dizzy Dead One at LA's West Memorial Park. Crafty Lynn (no relation to *Wonder Woman)* bought it eight years ago as an investment. At least nobody's going to be able to play disgusting necrogames like that with the late bassist/composer **Charlie Mingus** (obituary on page 28). Before his death was announced, Mingus was cremated and his ashes scattered over the Ganges by his widow . . .

Contemporary legend **Heavy Cochran,** whose epoch-making debut single "I've Got Big Balls" was reviewed in *NME* last week, is managed by **John Lydon's** brother **Jim** . . .

Oh ye of little faith: everybody who used to think that willowy heavy-breather **Amanda Lear** once had a sex-change operation can now ponder whether this is simply a Beauty Of Nature or some kind of scientific breakthrough. Amanda is having a baby!

Finally, two radically different views of the modern disco phenomenon which we hear so much about today. **Ringo Starr** ordered a DJ to stop playing old **Beatles** hits at a rollerskating party because he wanted to fall on his ass to the latest disco noises, while **Chaka Khan** told *BAM* magazine that she ain't no disco fan. "I just love punk," she said. "I think it's decadent. I love the **Dead Kennedys** and **The Ramones.** I have a big collection at home." A big collection of Dead Kennedys? What kind of airfreshener does she use?

BETTER BADGES

TOP TEN

This week		Last week
1	PIL	1
2	CLASH POLICE	2
3	THE JAM	5
4	BUZZCOCKS	4
5	SMIRKS AGAINST TRAVOLTA	3
6	LOVE	6
7	BITES	7
8	ALTERNATIVE ULSTER	–
9	X-RAY SPEX	–
10	GANG OF FOUR	–

New Releases

30p Drunk Punk

25p Tapper '76, African Herbsman, What you see it what you are, Gen X45, Rock against Xmas, Merry Wanna.

20p (I want) more rope, Sham 69, Cabaret Voltaire, Prag-Vec, Lightning Raiders, Pink Fairies Love, The Doomed, Spizz Oil, Germ Free, Kraftwerk, Tony Parsons. Julie Burchill, Gauche Siouxsie.

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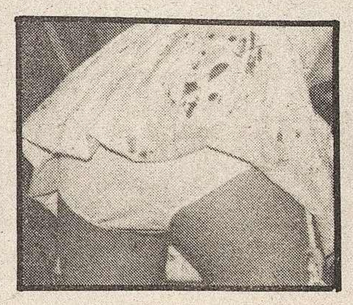

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FRANK ZAPPA

BIRMINGHAM ODEON	Sunday 11th February	021 643 6101
MANCHESTER APOLLO	Monday 12th February	061 273 1112/3
NEWCASTLE CITY HALL	Tuesday 13th February	0632 20007
GLASGOW APOLLO	Wednesday 14th February	041 332 9221/2
BRIGHTON CENTRE	Friday 16th February	0273 202881
HAMMERSMITH ODEON LONDON	Sat. 17th-Mon. 19th February	01-748 4081

AVERAGE WHITE BAND

+ Special Guests **+ INNER CIRCLE**

RAINBOW THEATRE LONDON	Sat 17th- Sun 18th February	01-263 3148
BIRMINGHAM ODEON	Tuesday 20th February	021 643 6101
MANCHESTER APOLLO	Wednesday 21st February	061 273 1112/3
GLASGOW APOLLO	Thursday 22nd February	041 332 9221/2
ABERDEEN CAPITOL	Wednesday 28th February	0224 23141
EDINBURGH ODEON	Thursday 1st March	031 667 3805
LANCASTER UNIVERSITY	Friday 2nd March	0524 65201
LEEDS UNIVERSITY	Saturday 3rd March	0532 39071
BRISTOL HIPPODROME	Monday 5th March	0272 299444
BRIGHTON DOME	Tuesday 6th March	0273 682127
RAINBOW THEATRE LONDON	Thurs. 8th-Fri. 9th March	01-263 3148

JOHN McLAUGHLIN LARRY CORYELL PACO DE LUCIA

ROYAL ALBERT HALL LONDON	Wednesday 14th February	01-589 8212

HORSLIPS

+ Ronnie Paisley Band

HAMMERSMITH ODEON LONDON	Friday 2nd February	01-748 4081
MANCHESTER APOLLO	Saturday 3rd February	061 273 1112/3
BIRMINGHAM HIPPODROME	Sunday 4th February	021 622 2576
EDINBURGH USHER HALL	Thursday 8th February	031 228 1564
GLASGOW APOLLO	Friday 9th February	041 332 9221/2
BRISTOL COLSTON HALL	Friday 16th February	0272 291768
OXFORD NEW THEATRE	Sunday 18th February	0632 44544

ELTON JOHN

A Single Man in Concert with

RAY COOPER

GLASGOW APOLLO	Sat 17th- Sun 18th March	041 332 9221/2
EDINBURGH ODEON	Monday 19th March	031 667 3805
NEWCASTLE CITY HALL	Weds 21st-Thurs 22nd March	0632 20007
PRESTON GUILDHALL	Friday 23rd March	0772 21721
BELFAST WHITLA HALL	Mon 26th- Tues 27th March	0232 24803
DUBLIN NATIONAL STADIUM	Thurs 29th- Fri 30th March	Dublin 771640
THEATRE ROYAL LONDON	Mon 2nd- Sat 7th April	01-836 5876
BRIGHTON DOME	Mond 9th- Tues 10th March	0273 682127
SOUTHAMPTON GAUMONT	Weds 11th- Thurs 12th March	0703 722645
BRISTOL HIPPODROME	Sat 14th- Sun 15th March	0272 299444
OXFORD NEW THEATRE	Tuesday 17th March	0632 44544
COVENTRY THEATRE	Wednesday 18th March	0203 23141
DERBY ASSEMBLY ROOMS	Thursday 19th March	0332 31111
BIRMINGHAM HIPPODROME	Sat 21st- Sun 22nd March	021 622 2576
MANCHESTER APOLLO	Tues 24th- Thurs 26th March	061 273 1112/3

with

JOAN ARMATRADING

+ Special Guest

GEORGE DUKE

GLASGOW APOLLO	Friday 2nd March	041 332 9221/2
NEWCASTLE CITY HALL	Saturday 3rd March	0632 20007
MANCHESTER APOLLO	Mon 5th- Tues 6th March	061 273 1112/3
BRISTOL COLSTON HALL	Wednesday 7th March	0272 291768
BIRMINGHAM ODEON	Thurs 8th- Fri 9th March	021 643 6101
BRIGHTON CENTRE	Saturday 10th March	0273 202881
WEMBLEY ARENA LONDON	Mon 12th- Weds 14th March	01-902 1234

BILLY CONNOLLY'S BIG WEE TOUR

SHEFFIELD CITY HALL	Monday 26th March	0742 735295
MANCHESTER APOLLO	Tuesday 27th March	061 273 1112/3
PRESTON GUILDHALL	Wednesday 28th March	0772 21721
ABERDEEN CAPITOL	Friday 30th March	0224 23141
MAC ROBERT ARTS CENTRE STIRLING	Saturday 31st March	0786 61081
GLASGOW THEATRE ROYAL	Sunday 1st April	041 331 1234
EDINBURGH USHER HALL	Monday 2nd April	031 228 1564
NEWCASTLE CITY HALL	Tuesday 3rd April	0632 20007
LEEDS CITY VARIETIES	Thursday 5th April	0532 30808
LIVERPOOL EMPIRE	Friday 6th April	051 709 2548
BIRMINGHAM HIPPODROME	Saturday 7th April	021 622 2576
BRISTOL HIPPODROME	Sunday 8th April	0272 299444
THEATRE ROYAL LONDON	Monday 9th April	01-836 5876
OXFORD NEW THEATRE	Sunday 15th April	0632 44544
IPSWICH GAUMONT	Tuesday 17th April	0473 53641
LEICESTER DE MONTFORT HALL	Wednesday 18th April	0533 27632
COVENTRY THEATRE	Thursday 19th April	0203 23141
BOURNEMOUTH WINTER GARDENS	Sunday 22nd April	0202 26446
SOUTHAMPTON GAUMONT	Monday 23rd April	0703 29772

RENAISSANCE

GLASGOW APOLLO	Saturday 7th April	041 332 9221/2
EDINBURGH ODEON	Sunday 8th April	031 667 3805
BIRMINGHAM ODEON	Tuesday 10th April	021 643 6101
MANCHESTER APOLLO	Wednesday 11th April	061 273 1112/3
HAMMERSMITH ODEON LONDON	Thursday 12th April	01- 748 4081

BILL NELSON'S RED NOISE

BRISTOL HIPPODROME	Sunday 4th March	0272 299444
SOUTHAMPTON GAUMONT	Tuesday 6th March	0703 29772
BIRMINGHAM ODEON	Wednesday 7th March	021 643 6101
LEICESTER DE MONTFORT HALL	Thursday 8th March	0533 27632
LIVERPOOL EMPIRE	Saturday 10th March	051 709 2548
MANCHESTER APOLLO	Sunday 11th March	061 273 1112/3
NEWCASTLE CITY HALL	Monday 12th March	0632 20007
SHEFFIELD CITY HALL	Tuesday 13th March	0742 735295
BRADFORD ST. GEORGE'S HALL	Wednesday 14th March	0274 32563
LANCASTER UNIVERSITY	Friday 16th March	0524 65201
LEEDS UNIVERSITY	Saturday 17th March	0532 39071
THEATRE ROYAL LONDON	Sunday 18th March	01-836 5876

by arrangement with Barry Clarke and Words

ROD ARGENT

featuring

Phil Collins, Gary Moore, Rob Lumley, Alfonso Johnson.

THE VENUE LONDON		
Thurs. 8th- Fri. 9th February		01-834 5500
CITY HALL ST. ALBANS		
Saturday 10th February		0727 64511

For all ticket prices and performance times please ring the box office numbers above. The best tickets for all the above London concerts can be obtained from the Harvey Goldsmith Box Offices at Chappells, 50 New Bond Street, London W1 01-629 3453 and the Great Gear Market, 85 Kings Road, London SW3 01-352 9363 (25p booking fee per ticket).